



# *Dancing with* **Śiva**

शिवेन सह नर्तनम्  
सनातनधर्मप्रश्नोत्तरम्





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# *Dancing with* **Śiva**

Hinduism's  
Contemporary Catechism

शिवेन सह नर्तनम्  
सनातनधर्मप्रश्नोत्तरम्

Satguru Sivaya  
Subramuniaswami



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# Dedication

## Grantha Nivedana

## ग्रन्थनिवेदन

**G**ANESHA, THE LORD OF CATEGORIES, WHO REMOVED ALL BARRIERS TO THE MANIFESTATION OF THIS CONTEMPORARY HINDU CATECHISM, to Him we offer reverent obeisance This holy text is dedicated to my *satguru*, Sage Yogaswāmī of Sri Lanka, perfect *siddha yogi* and illumined master who knew the Unknowable and held Truth in the palm of his hand As monarch of the Nandinātha Sampradāya's Kailāsa Paramparā, this obedient disciple of Chellappaswāmī infused in me all that you will find herein He commanded all to seek within, to know the Self and to see God Śiva everywhere and in everyone Among his great sayings "Know thy Self by thyself Śiva is doing it all All is Śiva Be still"

Well over 2,000 years ago our great *paramaguru*, Rishi Tirumular, aptly conveyed the spirit of *Dancing with Śiva*

*The thirty-six elements dance Sadāśiva dances. Consciousness dances Śiva-Śakti dances The animate and inanimate dance All these and the Vedas dance when the Supreme dances His dance of bliss The seven worlds as His golden abode, the five chakras as His pedestal, the central kundalinī śakti as His divine stage, thus in rapture He dances, He who is Transcendent Light He dances with the celestials He dances in the golden hall He dances with the three Gods He dances with the assembly of silent sages He dances in song He dances in ultimate energy He dances in souls—He who is the Lord of Dances Tat Astu*



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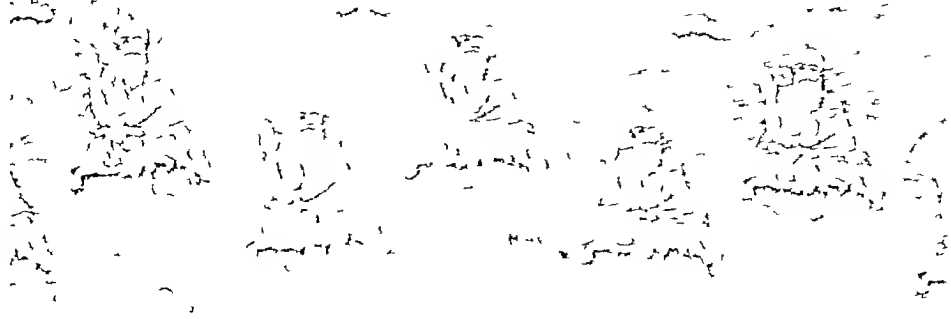
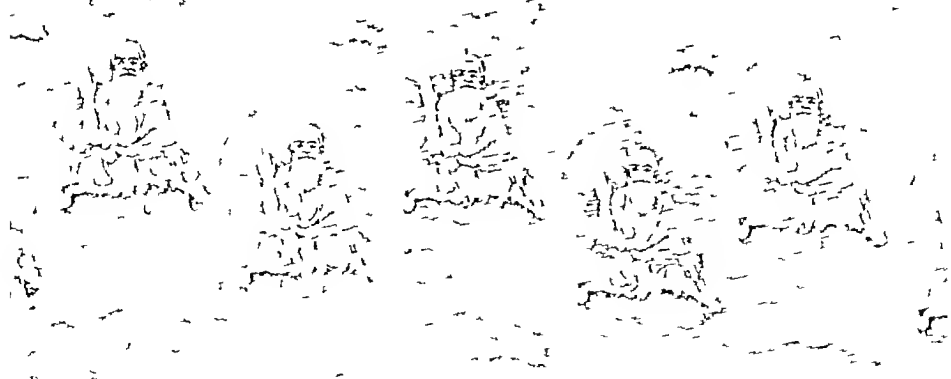
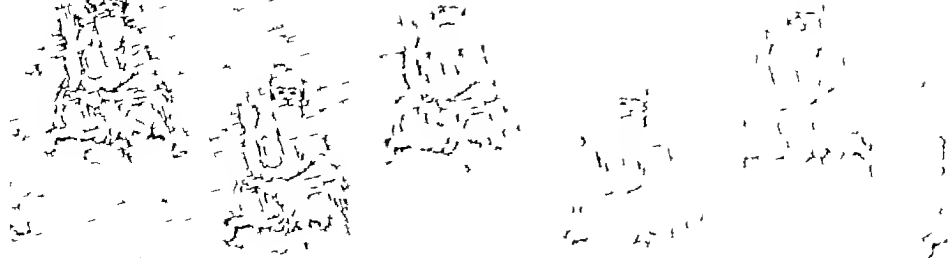
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# Author's Introduction

*Granthakāra Bhūmikā*

ग्रन्थकारभूमिका

IT IS NO ACCIDENT THAT YOU HAVE FOUND THIS BOOK AND THE TREASURES IT CONTAINS. IT'S ALL PART OF THE DIVINE DANCE OF DESTINY. THE treasure you hold in the palm of your hand is divine knowledge, knowledge about you and God, knowledge about how to live a spiritual life, knowledge about what Hindus teach and believe. All of this and more awaits you in the chapters that follow. Follow it, and one day you will hold Truth in the palm of your hand—just as simply.

While other religions are precisely defined by explicit and often unyielding beliefs, Hinduism condones no such constraints. For the Hindu, intuition is far more important than intellect, experience supercedes dogma, and personal realization is held infinitely more precious than outer expressions or affiliations of faith. Philosopher S. Rādhākṛishnan said it well: "The mechanical faith which depends on authority and wishes to enjoy the consolations of religion without the labor of being religious is quite different from the religious faith which has its roots in experience."

Hindu religious philosophy is based on experience, on personal discovery and testing of things. It does not say, "Believe as others do or suffer." Rather, it says, "Know thy Self, inquire and be free." There are no heretics in Hinduism, for God is everywhere and in all things. In such an open laboratory, Hindu spirituality has grown over the millennia so diverse and rich that it defies definition. Even knowledgeable Hindus, after a lifetime of study, will hesitate to say that Hinduism is one thing and not another. Indeed, the very idea of

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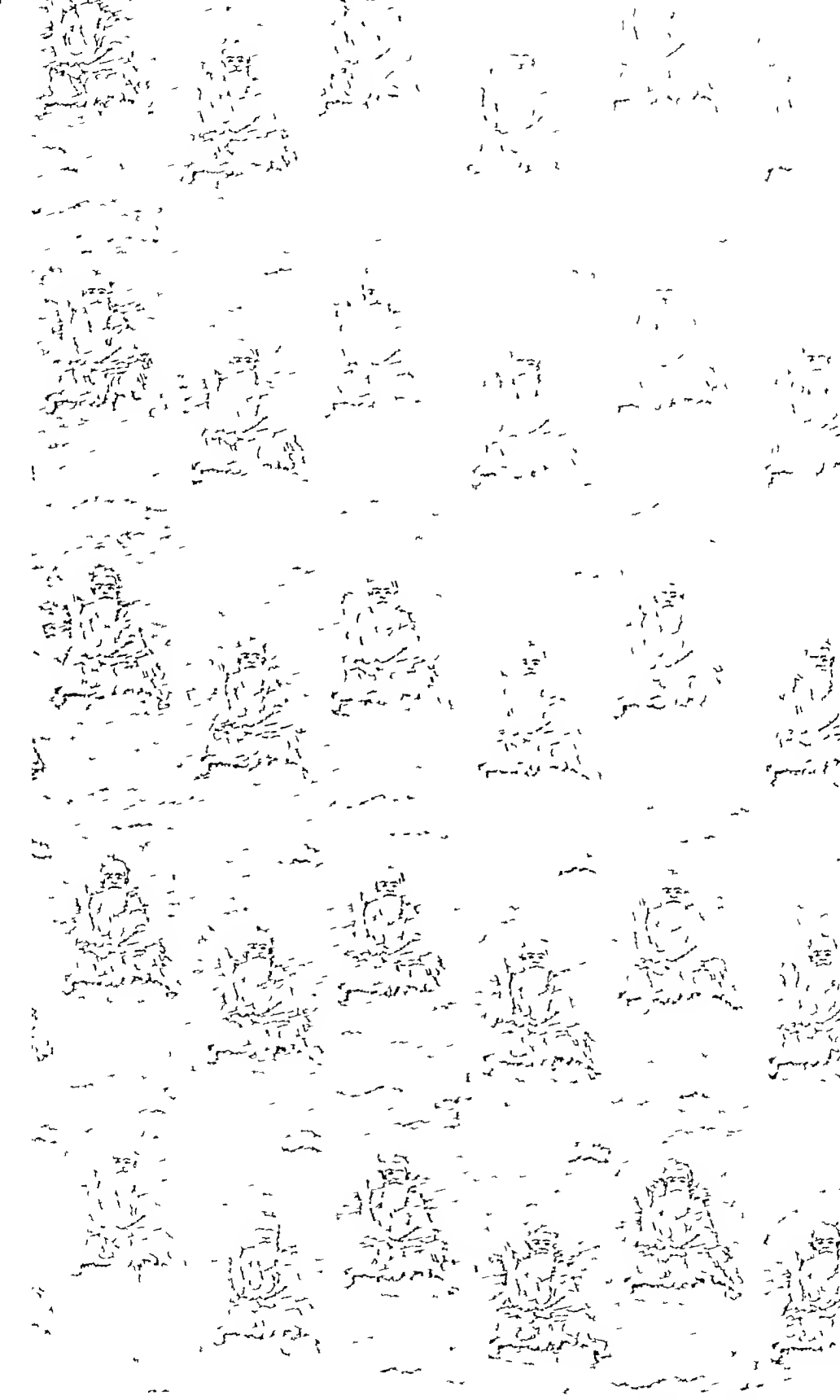
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a Hindu catechism is, for many, unthinkable, a perilous and impertinent pursuit. Until now, no one has attempted such a complete overview, making this a rare, and perhaps remarkable, book. One might even say an inevitable one. If, therefore, in undertaking the impossible we have overlooked any lineage, neglected any tradition or vital issue, please call to mind that it is human to err and only God is perfect and find room in your heart to overlook any oversight.

A simple warning is due. This collection of customs and beliefs is not a detached, scholastic analysis of Hinduism, but a view from the inside, a view of the religion as Hindus themselves would wish their tradition honored and explained to others. Nor is this yet another dogma added to the mountains of doctrines and decrees which have crushed the human spirit throughout history. Every instinct in Hinduism rebels against the doctrine which is oppressive or narrow-minded. Every instinct in Hinduism rejoices in tolerance and in acknowledgement of the many paths, even those that seem to contradict its own. When you believe that God is everywhere, in all there is wherever it is, it becomes impossible to hate or injure or seek to aggressively convert others. That is the spirit of this book. It is a transcript of the life lived by hundreds of millions of people, one out of six of the human family. Like Hinduism itself, this contemporary catechism is an ongoing revelation—a dance more than a doctrine.

Dancing with Śiva! What an extraordinary expression of our closeness to God, our creative interplay with God. The Cosmic Dance describes the Hindu view of existence, from the first thunder of the drum in His right hand announcing the Beginning, to the final all-consuming flames in His left hand pronouncing the End, which but heralds a new Beginning. Thus, dancing with Śiva is everything we do, everything we think and say and feel, from our seeming birth to our so-called death. It is man and God forever engaged in sacred movement. The ancient sages chose the dance to depict God for good

reason. Esoterically, movement is the most primal act of existence Without this simple thing, there would be no universe, no us, no experience, nothing Light is movement Thought is movement. Atoms are movement Life is movement And, the Hindu holds, God is movement Also, dance is the only creative act in which there is perfect oneness of the creator and his creation Unlike a painting, a poem, an invention or any other artistic impulse, when the dance is over there is no product, no thing to save and enjoy As with life, we may perceive the dance, never possess it. One cannot separate the dancer from dancing, just as one cannot separate God from the world or from ourselves Of special meaning is the place where Śiva dances in the *chitsabhā*, the hall of consciousness. In other words, it happens within each of us.

The vast complexity of Śiva's Cosmic Dance is traditionally represented in 108 poses Over twenty centuries ago, Rishi Tirumular of the Nandinātha Sampradāya's Kailāsa Paramparā praised God Śiva's never-ending dance with loving eloquence "In all worlds He is, the Holy Lord In darkness He is, light He is In sun He is, in moon He is Everywhere He is The Lord is in all creation None knows His coming and going. He is distant. He is near. Multiple He is One He is Water, earth, sky, fire and wind, the spark within the body—all these He is He is the walking *jīva* here below Deathless He is."

It is imperative at this time in our history—when the world, our Earth, is on the brink of an inner and outer space age—that we continue to value and learn from ancient Hindu wisdom. Long, long ago, great sages of India unfolded these eternal truths from within themselves and recorded them as written scripture to be sung out through the voices of their representatives today. So great was their insight Truly, this eternal wisdom lives now and will live on into the next generation, the next and the next Hear the famed prayer offered by *rishis* of yore "Lead me from unreality to reality Lead me from darkness to light Lead me from death to immortality"

## The Beliefs of Hinduism

Hinduism, more than any other religion, has encompassed the full spectrum of philosophic positions, and to this day venerates living exponents of each. Thus it is that one teacher will praise devotion as the ultimate path, while another, spurning devotion, says liberation comes only upon the shattering of this universe's illusory appearance. How then to understand Hinduism? From the Himalayan vaults, ten thousand streams of thought descend, their cool waters giving life to all below. These flow together, their convergences becoming broad tributaries. From these, two mighty rivers are born which have through history watered and made green the growth of Indian spirituality—one is Vedānta and the other Siddhānta. This contemporary catechism is the confluence of these two potent traditions into a single torrent, the inundation of the Sanātana Dharma in full, fierce flood and force.

## What Do Most Hindus Believe?

There are nine beliefs, or *śraddhā*, which though not exhaustive, offer a simple summary of Hindu spirituality.

- 1 Hindus believe in the divinity of the *Vedas*, the world's most ancient scripture, and venerate the *Āgamas* as equally revealed. These primordial hymns are God's word and the bedrock of Sanātana Dharma, the eternal religion which has neither beginning nor end.
- 2 Hindus believe in a one, all-pervasive Supreme Being who is both immanent and transcendent, both Creator and Unmanifest Reality.
- 3 Hindus believe that the universe undergoes endless cycles of creation, preservation and dissolution.
- 4 Hindus believe in *karma*, the law of cause and effect by which each individual creates his own destiny by his thoughts, words and deeds.
- 5 Hindus believe that the soul reincarnates, evolving

- through many births until all *karmas* have been resolved, and *moksha*, spiritual knowledge and liberation from the cycle of rebirth, is attained Not a single soul will be eternally deprived of this destiny
- 6 Hindus believe that divine beings exist in unseen worlds and that temple worship, rituals, sacraments as well as personal devotionals create a communion with these *devas* and Gods.
  - 7 Hindus believe that a spiritually awakened master, or *sat-guru*, is essential to know the Transcendent Absolute, as are personal discipline, good conduct, purification, pilgrimage, self-inquiry and meditation
  - 8 Hindus believe that all life is sacred, to be loved and revered, and therefore practice *ahimsā*, “noninjury”
  - 9 Hindus believe that no particular religion teaches the only way to salvation above all others, but that all genuine religious paths are facets of God’s Pure Love and Light, deserving tolerance and understanding

**World Religions at a Glance, and Hindu Population Map**  
We list here how the number of Hindus compares with other religions and provide a map indicating where Hindus reside in the world Main statistical sources *World Christian Encyclopedia* and the Worldwatch Institute

1993 World Population: 5.2 billion			
Hindus	1 billion	Taoists	50 million
Muslims	1 billion	Other Faiths	50 million
Catholics	1.5 billion	Shintoists	30 million
Protestants	600 million	Jews	12 million
Nonbelievers	600 million	Sikhs	9 million
Confucian	400 million	Jains	6 million
Buddhists	350 million	Zoroastrians	125,000
Tribals	100 million	<b>Total:</b>	<b>5.2 Billion</b>

# Where Hindus Live



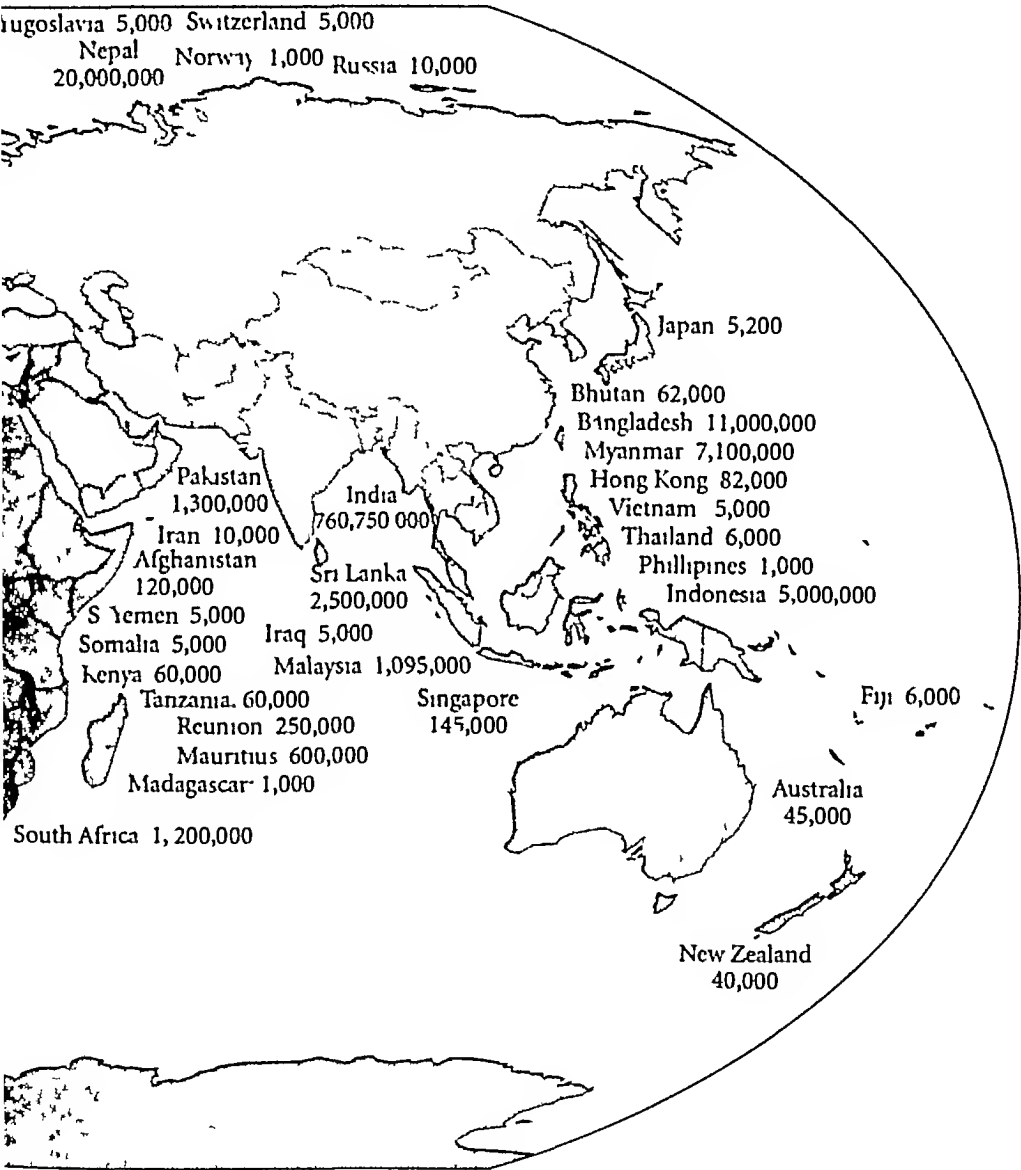
Algeria	500
Barbados	100
Brazil	50
Brunei	500
Cameroon	50
C. African Rep	20

Czech Republic	
and Slovakia	100
Chad	20
Chile	20
China	50
Congo	100

Columbia	50
Cuba	100
Equador	500
Finland	100
Gabon	100
Ghana	500

Guinea	50
Hungary	50
Iceland	6
Ireland	20
Israel	100
Italy	200

While India is home to 93% of the world's 816 million Hindus, nearly 60 million are scattered widely across the globe. This map shows larger communities, with smaller ones listed below.



Ivory Coast	1,000	Lybia	500	Qatar	500	Syria	100
Zambia	500	Mexico	20	Senegal	100	Tunisia	100
Jordan	1,000	Morocco	50	Seychelles	500	Turkey	100
Lebanon	100	Mozambique	500	Sierra Leone	500	Upper Volta	100
Liberia	500	Panama	500	South Korea	50	Yemen, North	100
Laos	500	Poland	100	Sudan	500		



## Hinduism Is an Eastern Religion

To place Hinduism in the context of world thought, it is first important to note that it is a religion of the East. This is a vital fact, for there is a vast difference between the way seekers in the East and the West have traditionally viewed the ultimate questions "Who am I? Where did I come from? Where am I going?" The East has tended to be unitive, idealistic and introspective. The West has tended to be dualistic, materialistic and extroverted. Looking at it simply, the major Eastern religions are Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism and Sikhism. The Western religions are Judaism, Christianity and Islam. This comparison does not include the Oriental faiths: Confucianism, Shinto and Taoism.

The Eastern mind tends to see God everywhere, in all things and, therefore, to see everything as sacred. The Western mind considers it heresy to believe that God pervades all things, and makes a strong difference between what is sacred and what is profane. While the Eastern mind holds to *karma*, reincarnation and liberation, the Westerner postulates a single life for the soul, followed by reward or punishment. Whereas personal inner experience is the crux of religion from the Eastern view, belief and faith are valued most highly in the West. While Eastern religions are accommodating of other views, believing that all paths lead ultimately to God, Western religions tend to be dogmatic, stressing theirs as the one true God and the one true religion.

## The Hindu View of Life

The soul, in its intelligence, searches for its Self, slowly ascending the path that leads to enlightenment and liberation. It is an arduous, delightful journey through the cycles of birth, death and rebirth culminating in Self Realization, the direct and personal spiritual experience of God, of the Self, of Truth. This alone among all things in the cosmos can bring freedom from the bondages of ignorance and desire. This is

the highest realization There is none greater Hindus believe that all women and men are on this path and that all will ultimately reach its summit It is a glorious and encouraging concept—that every single soul will reach Truth, *moksha*, none left to suffer forever for human frailties and faults

Hinduism is our planet's original and oldest living religion, with no single founder For as long as man has lived and roamed across Earth's land and water masses, breathed its air and worshiped in awe its fire, the Sanātana Dharma has been a guide of righteous life for evolving souls Shortly into the twenty-first century, Hindu adherents will number over a billion All of them are Hindus, yes, but they represent a broad range of beliefs, *sādhana*s and mystic goals

While Hindus believe many diverse and exotic things, there are several bedrock concepts on which virtually all concur All Hindus worship one Supreme Reality, though they call it by many names, and teach that all souls will ultimately realize the truth of the *Vedas* and *Āgamas* Hindus believe that there is no eternal hell, no damnation They concur that there is no intrinsic evil All is good All is God In contrast, Western faiths postulate a living evil force, embodied in Satan that directly opposes the will of God

Hindus believe that the universe was created out of God and is permeated by Him—a Supreme Being who both is form and pervades form, who creates, sustains and destroys the universe only to recreate it again in unending cycles Hindus accept all genuine spiritual paths—from pure monism, which concludes that “God alone exists,” to theistic dualism, which asks, “When shall I know His Grace?” Each soul is free to find his own way, whether by devotion, austerity, meditation, *yoga* or selfless service (*sevā*) Hinduism's three pillars are temple worship, scripture and the *guru*-disciple tradition Hinduism strongly declares the validity of the three worlds of existence and the myriad Gods and *devas* residing within them Festivals, pilgrimage, chanting of holy

hymns and home worship are dynamic practices Love, nonviolence, good conduct and the law of *dharma* define the Hindu path. Hinduism explains that the soul reincarnates until all *karmas* are resolved and God Realization is attained.

Hindus wear the sectarian marks, called *tilaka*, on their foreheads as sacred symbols, distinctive insignia of their heritage Hinduism is a mystical religion, leading devotees to personally experience its eternal truths within themselves, finally reaching the pinnacle of consciousness where man and God are forever one They prefer cremation of the body upon death, rather than burial, believing that the soul lives on and will inhabit a new body on earth

While Hinduism has many sacred scriptures, all sects ascribe the highest authority to the *Vedas* and *Āgamas*, though their *Āgamas* differ somewhat Hinduism's nearly one billion adherents have tens of thousands of sacred temples and shrines, mostly in India, but now located in every community of the global village where Hindus have settled Its spiritual core is its holy men and women—millions of *sādhus*, *yogīs*, *swāmīs*, *vairāgīs*, saints and *satgurus* who have dedicated their lives to full-time service, devotion and God Realization, and to proclaiming the eternal truths of the Sanātana Dharma

### About this Edition of *Dancing with Śiva*

In this fourth edition of *Dancing with Śiva. Hinduism's Contemporary Catechism, Sanātana Dharma Praśnottaram*, the questions and answers have been brought into the ancient form of terse *ślokas*, also known as *sūtras*, followed by longer explanations called *bhāṣya* In the *Purānas* we find a description of this style "Those who know, say that a *sūtra* is brief, with no uncertainty, rich in substance, general, without useless words, and irrefutable" A mystical meaning is spoken in the *Mṛigendra Āgama*. "In it, as in a seed, grows the tree which is the subject of the treatise as a whole, such is the original *sūtra* which scintillates, adorned with words

such as *atha* ”

In olden days in India, before paper was invented, *ślokas* were written on palm leaves (*olaī*) in the South, scribed into the tough surface, or written on specially-prepared birch bark (*bhūrja pattra*) in the North. The unbound pages were small, about two inches high and six or eight inches wide. Verses written on them were usually uniform in length, two, three or four lines. To carry forward the refined finesse of those Vedic times, the *ślokas* and *bhāshyas* of this modern catechism have been composed to precise lengths—each *śloka* exactly four lines long and each *bhāshya* exactly twenty-one lines, not a millimeter more or less.

The book has more than tripled in size since the 309-page 1990 edition. First, I instructed a few of my *sannyāsins* to redo the artwork. You will see that they have combined traditional images with computerized technology to produce a unique art form that is the best of the East and the best of the West. More sacred symbols were added, and over 150 reproductions of Rājput paintings were selected from sources all over the world, chosen for their aptness to the many subjects covered.

Then I brought in hundreds of verses from Hindu scripture, mostly from the *Vedas*. There is a scriptural quote for each *bhāshya*, and at the end of every chapter, or *mandala*, there are two full pages of scripture elaborating the subject under discussion. We are hopeful that this anthology of hymns will inspire readers to dive deeper into the beauties of the *Vedas* and *Āgamas* on their own.

We then expanded by several hundred the number of Sanskrit terms in the book, and incorporated the diacritical marks into the special Minion family of fonts. We typeset the main lexicon entries in Devanāgarī, with the able editing assistance of several Sanskrit scholars. In the lexicon, we worked ardently to more fully amplify the essential concepts so briefly presented in the terse *ślokas* and *bhāshyas*. Thus,

over the months, what began as a simple glossary of terms steadily grew. The result is really an encyclopedic dictionary. Many terms can be defined in various ways, according to one's philosophical perspective. By understanding the terms as defined in this lexicon, one can better understand their meaning in the body of the text.

Next, we assembled a timeline, a detailed chronology of ancient Bhārat and modern India, a record of Hindu events placed in the context of world historic landmarks. I believe this chronology is the only one of its kind and encourage teachers to teach it and students to study it to understand the way Hindu history flows alongside the other great human civilizations.

Last but not least, in the final weeks of production, we added a new section called "Truth Is One, Paths Are Many," drawn from the international newspaper, *Hinduism Today*. This 60-page resource offers a brief summary of the beliefs and paths of attainment of the world's major religions, faiths and philosophies and several point-counterpoints, including a comparison of Eastern and Western thought. For the past ten years it has been widely used as an educational tool in universities and various interfaith gatherings, and I felt it should definitely be part of this book. The timeline, lexicon and Truth Is One are each complete studies unto themselves.

One of the limitations we encountered was how to speak of the genderless God without implying that the Divine is either man or woman. Working through the constraints of the English language, we just didn't know what to do with the words *he*, *she*, *him*, *her*, *hers* and *his* in reference to God and the Gods. To speak of God in the neuter form, *It*, seemed a worse solution, for that indicates a cold and indifferent Deity. Another possibility was to speak of God as *She* and *He* alternately. But this would require also using *God* and *God-dess* alternately, since *God* itself is a masculine term. English seems to offer no reasonable way around the use of mascu-

line pronouns, so, reluctantly, we have referred to God and Gods in mostly masculine terms. One consolation is that this problem also exists in the original Sanskrit, so we emerged from the dilemma by accepting the precedent set by the *Vedas* and *Āgamas* to describe the Supreme Lord.

In producing this modern catechism, or *praśnottaram* (literally, “questions and answers”), we kept in mind the need to provide resources so that Hindu institutions and communities around the globe could have, at their fingertips, authentic teachings from which they could locally develop classes and courses and various kinds of study. We encourage scholars, *panditas*, *swāmīs* and elders everywhere to work with us in translating *Dancing with Śiva* into many of the world’s more than 3,000 languages.

### Ways to Study *Dancing with Śiva*

It is our belief that a full study of this catechism will provide a basic understanding of the Hindu religion as it is lived today. We have taught its earlier editions for over forty years in many countries, and we know that it is competent to change the lives of people, to bring them closer to their inner Divinity, to strengthen husband and wife relationships, cement family unity and establish strong, unbreakable connections with God and the Gods. The key is study, by which we do not mean mere recitation, but living the life described in our venerable traditions. There are seven ways this book can be routinely studied, whether individually or in groups, small or large.

- 1 The twelve parts, called *upanishads*, in this catechism, one for each month of the year, may be used as lecture notes or personal study for the month. Each of the twelve is a completely different subject. An *upanishad* is a collection of one, two or three *mandalas*.
- 2 The thirty-one chapters, called *mandalas*, each contain-

ing five *ślokas*, may be studied one each day for a month and then repeated time and time again

- 3 There are 155 *ślokas* An ideal way to study the catechism by yourself is to take one *śloka* and its accompanying *bhāṣya* each day Study it, meditate on it Apply it to your own life. Then move on to the next This will give a daily study of over five months
- 4 Another way to study the book is the “subject study,” choosing concepts which interest you and following their threads throughout the book For example, using the index, one could take the word *soul* and explore its various references—the soul’s creation, its evolution, old souls and young souls This can be even more interesting if you explore the lexicon references as well Tracing the meaning of terms in this way through the index and lexicon is a wonderful tool for lectures, classes, teaching of children and your own personal enjoyment
5. The fifth way is to read and meditate on the profound Vedic verses, which are found, more than any other scripture, in this *praśnottaram* They are as alive today as the day they were spoken thousands of years ago Is it really what they say that stirs the higher consciousness, or is it what they do to the inner currents of the body as they stimulate spirituality?
- 6 Another way is to simply read the book, cover to cover
- 7 A final way, since this book has been magically impressed into the *ākāśa*, is to hold it in your hands and absorb its knowledge or put it under your pillow at night

### How to Teach *Dancing with Śiva*

For those who are serious about conducting regular lectures or classes on *Dancing with Śiva, Hinduism’s Contemporary Catechism*, we have created the following simple guide This

system has several objectives 1) it gives you a systematic way of presenting the material, without repeating yourself; 2) it relieves you from having to decide what you are going to talk about when lecture or class time comes around and 3) it creates a powerful harmony of minds around the globe among all who are teaching and learning the subject matter at the same time

The cardinal principle is that there is one *mandala* (containing five *ślokas* and *bhāshyas*, and two pages of scriptural verses) for each day of the month So, for example, if you are giving a lecture on the 12th day of the month, your subject matter should be one or more of the five *ślokas* of *mandala* 12, "The Four Dharmas" These five *ślokas* and their *bhāshyas* create a complete concept and are more than ample for a well-rounded lecture or seminar

January 12    Mandala 12 (five *ślokas* and *bhāshyas*)

January 13    Mandala 13 (five *ślokas* and *bhāshyas*)

January 14    Mandala 14 (five *ślokas* and *bhāshyas*)

January 15    Mandala 14 (five *ślokas* and *bhāshyas*)

etc

In addition, the art and sacred symbols can be used when explaining concepts to children, adding a visual dimension to their young understanding The entire book can be used as a coloring book as it is, or by making enlarged copies of the black and white photos on a photocopy machine Children enjoy animation, and more adventuresome parents may wish to turn portions into an educational video series for their community or nation Children love toys and games, and interesting charades and memorization games can be developed by inventive parents and teachers After all, it is in giving our tradition to the children that we assure its perpetuation into the future

Only days before this catechism was sent off to the printer, the night before Mahāśivarātri, we saw the final results in color of the March, 1993, edition of *Hinduism Today*, in which



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we had reprinted the very popular primer for children covering Hinduism from A to Z in an illustrated and fun way. For older youth, there appeared a more mature summary, a traditional explanation of the five main precepts and practices. We were inspired to incorporate both of these in this book for parents to teach their children. The 1992 Bali Conference of the World Hindu Federation of Nepal decreed that such a simple presentation of the minimal duties for parents to pass on Sanātana Dharma to their children be outlined and spread worldwide. With that in mind, we added to *Dancing with Śiva* a new resource section called "A Children's Primer," which includes Hinduism A to Z, the Five Precepts and Five Practices, and an illustrated summary of the essential Hindu *samskāras*, or rites of passage.

### Awake! Arise!

As you proceed through *Dancing with Śiva, Hinduism's Contemporary Catechism, Sanātana Dharma Prasnottaram*, you will come to see that it contains a new presentation of very ancient knowledge. You will soon realize that, somewhere within you, you already know these truths. You will find yourself traveling back in your memory, perhaps for several lives, and remembering that you have studied them before in the same way that you are studying them now.

This textbook gives an organized approach as to what to say to the youth and the adults of our religion. It also gives truth-seekers who have discovered the mystical realities a coherent and complete philosophical context through which they can understand and continue to pursue the often unbidden experiences they encounter. It validates their inner realizations and gives them the confidence to persevere.

A new breed of souls is even now coming up in the world. They are fearless because they are strong. They do not fear death, ill-health or lack of knowledge. Their only qualification is that they love and worship God and the Gods. They

have no magic formula They are selling nothing They need nothing They are who they are You may be one of them

So, proceed with confidence Success is assured You cannot fail if *bhakti* is integrated with *jñāna*, Siddhānta with Vedānta, Āgamas with *Vedas*, and Hindu Dharma with everyday life Yea, this is the secure path, the safe path, leading to knowledge, experience and recognition, then realization, of your true, divine, eternal Self Awake, arise and stop not until the goal is reached! It is no accident that you have found this book and the treasures it contains

Love and blessings to you from this and inner worlds,



Satguru Sivaya Subramuniyaswami

Jagadāchārya of the Nandinātha

Sampradāya's Kailāsa Paramparā,

Guru Mahāsannidhānam,

Kauai Aadheenam, Hawaii,

Mahāśivarātri, February 18, 1993, Hindu year 5094

*O Infinite Effulgence, praise be to thee Hail!  
Thou who is water, fire, wind, ether too! Hail thou  
who creates all souls but is Himself uncreated Hail  
thou the culmination of all souls, hail! To the one  
who embodies within Himself the Vedic hymns and  
Vedic sacrifice, truth and untruth, light and darkness,  
joy and sorrow, the divided and undivided, the attachment and release, the beginning and ultimate end—  
to Him our songs of praise we sing*

SAINT MANIKKAVASAGAR



# Sanskrit Pronunciation

## VOWELS

Vowels marked like ā are sounded twice as long as short vowels. The diphthongs, e, ai, o and au, are always long.

अ	a	as in about
आ	ā	tar, father
इ	i	fill, lily
ई	ī	machine
उ	u	full, bush
ऊ	ū	allude
ऋ	ṛ	merrily
ॠ	ṛī	marine
ऌ	ḷ	revelry
ॡ	ḷī	prey
ए	e	aisle
ऐ	ai	aisle
ओ	o	go, stone
औ	au	Haus

## GUTTURAL CONSONANTS

Sounded in the throat

क	k	kite, seek
ख	kh	inkhorn
ग	g	good
घ	gh	loghouse
ङ	n	sing

## PALATAL CONSONANTS

Sounded at the roof of the mouth

च	ch	church
छ	ch	churchill
ज	j	jump
झ	jh	hedghog
ञ	ñ	hinge

## CEREBRAL CONSONANTS

Pronounced with the tongue turned up and

back against the roof of the mouth (retroflex)

ट	t	true
ठ	th	nuthook
ड	d	drum
ढ	dh	redhaired
ण	n	none

## DENTAL CONSONANTS

Sounded with the tip of the tongue at the back of the upper front teeth

त	t	tub
थ	th	anthill
द	d	dot
ध	dh	adhere
न	n	not

## LABIAL CONSONANTS

Sounded at the lips

प	p	pot
फ	ph	uphill
ब	b	bear
भ	bh	abhor
म	m	map

## SEMIVOWELS

य	y	yet (palatal)
र	r	road (cereb)
ल	l	lull (dental)
व	v	voice (labial), but more like w after consonants
ह	h	hear (guttural)

## SIBILANTS

श	ś	sure (palatal)
ष	sh	shut (cerebral)
स	s	saint (dental)

## ANUSVĀRA

The dot over Devanāgarī letters represents the nasal of the type of the letter it precedes, e.g. अंग = *anga*. It is transliterated as m or as the actual nasal (n, ñ, n, n, m). At the end of words it is म् (*m*).

## VISĀRGA ( ) h

Pronounced like *huh* (with a short, stopping sound), or *huh*, after i, ī and e.

## ASPIRATES

The *h* following a consonant indicates aspiration, the addition of air. Thus, *th* should not be confused with the *th* in the word *then*.

## SPECIAL CHARACTERS

ज्ञ *jñ* a nasalized sound, like *gya* or *jya*  
क्ष = क् + ष *ksh*

## CONVENTIONS

- 1 In this text, generally, the root forms of Sanskrit words are used, without case endings.
- 2 चछ is transliterated as *cch*, and चच as *cch*.
- 3 Most Tamil words are written without diacritical marks.
- 4 Geographical terms, e.g., *Himalaya*, are marked with diacriticals only as main lexicon entries.



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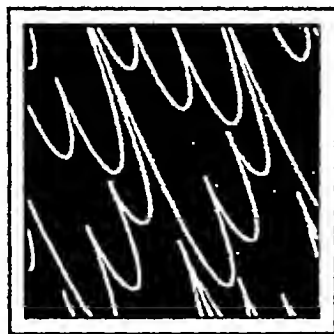
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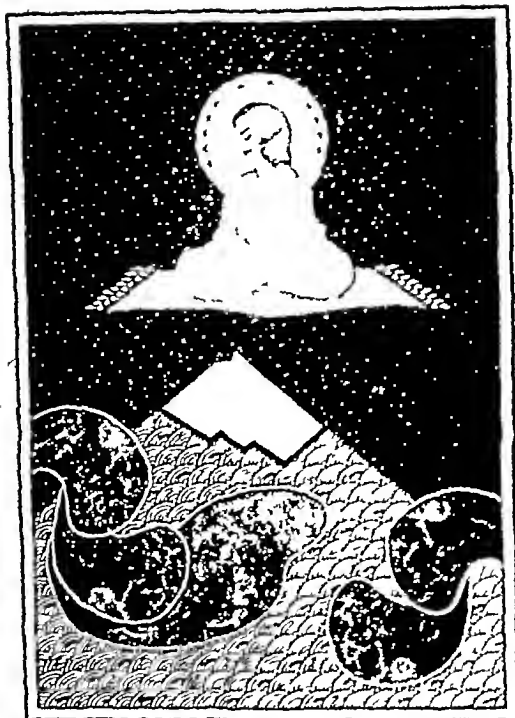


Sanātana Dharma Upanishad

सनातनधर्म उपनिषद्

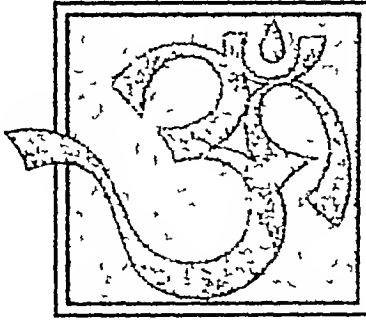


Eternal Truths



Paramā̃tma Darśana Maṇḍala

परमात्मदर्शनमण्डल



## Self Realization

*Pranava, Aum, is the root mantra and primal sound from which all creation issues forth. It is associated with Lord Ganeśa. Its three syllables stand at the beginning and end of every sacred verse, every human act. Aum*



# Who Am I? Where Did I Come From?

## ŚLOKA 1

*Rishis* proclaim that we are not our body, mind or emotions. We are divine souls on a wondrous journey. We came from God, live in God and are evolving into oneness with God. We are, in truth, the Truth we seek. Aum.

## BHĀSHYA

We are immortal souls living and growing in the great school of earthly experience in which we have lived many lives. Vedic *rishis* have given us courage by uttering the simple truth, "God is the Life of our life." A great sage carried it further by saying, there is one thing God cannot do. God cannot separate Himself from us. This is because God is our life. God is the life in the birds. God is the life in the fish. God is the life in the animals. Becoming aware of this Life energy in all that lives is becoming aware of God's loving presence within us. We are the undying consciousness and energy flowing through all things. Deep inside we are perfect this very moment, and we have only to discover and live up to this perfection to be whole. Our energy and God's energy are the same, ever coming out of the void. We are all beautiful children of God. Each day we should try to see the life energy in trees, birds, animals and people. When we do, we are seeing God Śiva in action. The *Vedas* affirm, "He who knows God as the Life of life, the Eye of the eye, the Ear of the ear, the Mind of the mind—he indeed comprehends fully the Cause of all causes." Aum Namah Śivāya



# Where Am I Going? What Is My Path?

## ŚLOKA 2

We are all growing toward God, and experience is the path. Through experience we mature out of fear into fearlessness, out of anger into love, out of conflict into peace, out of darkness into light and union in God. Aum.

## BHĀSHYA

We have taken birth in a physical body to grow and evolve into our divine potential. We are inwardly already one with God. Our religion contains the knowledge of how to realize this oneness and not create unwanted experiences along the way. The peerless path is following the way of our spiritual forefathers, discovering the mystical meaning of the scriptures. The peerless path is commitment, study, discipline, practice and the maturing of *yoga* into wisdom. In the beginning stages, we suffer until we learn. Learning leads us to service, and selfless service is the beginning of spiritual striving. Service leads us to understanding. Understanding leads us to meditate deeply and without distractions. Finally, meditation leads us to surrender in God. This is the straight and certain path, the *San Mārga*, leading to Self Realization—the inmost purpose of life—and subsequently to *moksha*, freedom from rebirth. The *Vedas* wisely affirm, “By austerity, goodness is obtained. From goodness, understanding is reached. From understanding, the Self is obtained, and he who obtains the Self is freed from the cycle of birth and death.” Aum Namah Śivāya





## What Is Meant by “Dancing with Śiva”?

### ŚLOKA 3

All motion begins in God and ends in God. The whole universe is engaged in a whirling flow of change and activity. This is Śiva's dance. We are all dancing with Śiva, and He with us. Ultimately, we are Śiva dancing. Aum

### BHĀSHYA

The world is seen as it truly is—sacred—when we behold Śiva's cosmic dance. Everything in the universe, all that we see, hear and imagine, is movement. Galaxies soar in movement; atoms swirl in movement. All movement is Śiva's dance. When we fight this movement and think it should be other than it is, we are reluctantly dancing with Śiva. We are stubbornly resisting, holding ourselves apart, criticizing the natural processes and movements around us. It is by understanding the eternal truths that we bring all areas of our mind into the knowledge of how to accept what is and not wish it to be otherwise. Once this happens, we begin to consciously dance with Śiva, to move with the sacred flow that surrounds us, to accept praise and blame, joy and sorrow, prosperity and adversity in equanimity, the fruit of understanding. We are then gracefully, in unrestrained surrender, dancing with Śiva. The *Vedas* state, “The cosmic soul is truly the whole universe, the immortal source of all creation, all action, all meditation. Whoever discovers Him, hidden deep within, cuts through the bonds of ignorance even during his life on earth.” Aum Namah Śivāya



# How Can We Learn to Dance with Śiva?

## ŚLOKA 4

Dance is movement, and the most exquisite dance is the most disciplined dance. Hindu spiritual disciplines lead to oneness with God through self-reflection, surrender, personal transformation and the many *yogas*. Aum.

## BHĀSHYA

To progress on the path, we study the *Vedas*, other scriptures and our *guru's* teachings and make every effort to apply these philosophical truths to daily experience. We strive to understand the mind in its fourfold nature: *chitta*, consciousness; *manas*, instinctive mind; *buddhi*, intellectual mind; and *ahamkāra*, ego or I-maker. We perform *japa*, meditation and *yoga* each day. Such spiritual discipline is known as *sādhana*. It is the mystical, mental, physical and devotional exercise that enables us to dance with Śiva by bringing inner advancement, changes in perception and improvements in character. *Sādhana* allows us to live in the refined and cultured soul nature, rather than in the outer, instinctive or intellectual spheres. For consistent progress, *sādhana* should be performed regularly, without fail, at the same time each day, preferably in the early hours before dawn. The most important *sādhana*s are the challenges and practices given by one's *guru*. The *Vedas* caution, "The Self cannot be attained by the weak, nor by the careless, nor through aimless disciplines. But if one who knows strives by right means, his soul enters the abode of God." Aum Namah Śivāya



## What Is the Ultimate Goal of Earthly Life?

### ŚLOKA 5

The ultimate goal of life on earth is to realize the Self, the rare attainment of *nirvikalpa samādhi*. Each soul discovers its Śivaness, Absolute Reality, Paraśiva—the timeless, formless, spaceless Self God. Aum Namah Śivāya.

### BHĀSHYA

The realization of the Self, Paraśiva, is the destiny of each soul, attainable through renunciation, sustained meditation and frying the seeds of *karmas* yet to germinate. It is the gateway to *moksha*, liberation from rebirth. The Self lies beyond the thinking mind, beyond the feeling nature, beyond action or any movement of even the highest state of consciousness. The Self God is more solid than a neutron star, more elusive than empty space, more intimate than thought and feeling. It is ultimate reality itself, the innermost Truth all seekers seek. It is well worth striving for. It is well worth struggling to bring the mind under the dominion of the will. After the Self is realized, the mind is seen for the unreality that it truly is. Because Self Realization must be experienced in a physical body, the soul cycles back again and again into flesh to dance with Śiva, live with Śiva and ultimately merge with Śiva in undifferentiated oneness. Yea, *jīva* is actually Śiva. The *Vedas* explain, “As water poured into water, milk poured into milk, *ghee* into *ghee* become one without differentiation, even so the individual soul and the Supreme Self become one.” Aum Namah Śivāya.

## Scriptures Speak on Self Realization

Lead me from unreality to reality Lead me from darkness to light  
Lead me from death to immortality *Yajur Veda*

He is the Supreme Brahman, the Self of all, the chief foundation  
of this world, subtler than the subtle, eternal That thou art, thou  
art That *Atharva Veda*

One should meditate on the *ātman*, which consists of spirit, whose  
embodiment is life, whose form is light, whose essence is space,  
which changes its form at will, swift as thought *Yajur Veda*

Subtlest of the subtle, greatest of the great, the *ātman* is hidden in  
the cave of the heart of all beings. He who, free from all urges,  
beholds Him overcomes sorrow, seeing by grace of the Creator, the  
Lord and His glory *Yajur Veda*

Perishable is matter Immortal, imperishable the Lord, who, the  
One, controls the perishable and also the soul Meditating on Him,  
uniting with Him, becoming more and more like Him, one is freed  
at the last from the world's illusion *Yajur Veda*

I am the Supreme Brahman! I am the Lord of the universe!  
Such is the settled conviction of the *muktas* All other experiences  
lead to bondage When the Self is clearly realized not to be  
the body, the realizer gains peace and becomes free from  
all desires. *Devikālottara Āgama*

Realize the Self always to be neither above nor below, nor on either  
side, not without nor within, but to be eternal and shining beyond  
the sublime world *Sarvajñānōttara Āgama*

That which is neither conscious nor unconscious, which is invisible, impalpable, indefinable, unthinkable, unnameable, whose very essence consists of the experience of its own self, which absorbs all diversity, is tranquil and benign, without a second, which is what they call the fourth state—that is the *ātman*. This it is which should be known

*Atharva Veda*

On the emergence of spontaneous supreme knowledge occurs that state of movement in the vast unlimited expanse of consciousness which is Śiva's state, the supreme state of Reality

*Śiva Sūtras*

When the Creator dances, the worlds He created dance. To the measure that He dances in our knowledge, our thoughts, too, dance. When He in heart endearing dances, the several elements, too, dance. Witness in rapture surpassing the dance of Him who is a glowing flame

*Tirumantiram*

O God of mercy, who performs the dance of illimitable happiness in the hall of inconceivable intelligence! The *Ṛig* and the other *Vedas* are thundering forth in words, announcing to us that all are thy slaves, all things belong to thee, all actions are thine, that thou pervades everywhere, that this is thy nature. Such is the teaching of those who, though they never speak, yet broke silence for our sake

*Tayumanavar*

Just as light shines, dispelling darkness, so also the Supreme Self shines, dispelling ignorance. Just as a lamp spontaneously goes out if not fed with oil, so also the ego becomes extinct if one meditates unceasingly and becomes merged in the Self. There is no higher gain than the Self.

*Sarvajñānottara Āgama*

The Supreme Lord is not two. To me belongs the glory of meditating that I, His devoted servant, am He. As one imagines, so one becomes. Therefore, practice the meditation of "I am He." Then all your actions will become His action

*Natchintanai*





# Hindu Maṇḍala हिन्दुमण्डल



## Hinduism

*Vata*, the banyan tree, *Ficus religiosa*, symbolizes Hinduism, which branches out in all directions, draws from many roots, spreads shade far and wide, yet stems from one great trunk Śiva as Silent Sage sits beneath it Aum



## What Are Hinduism's Principal Sects?

### ŚLOKA 6

The Sanātana Dharma, or "eternal faith," known today as Hinduism, is a family of religions that accept the authority of the *Vedas*. Its four principal denominations are Śaivism, Śāktism, Vaiṣṇavism and Smārtism. Aum.

### BHĀSHYA

The world's billion Hindus, one-sixth of the human family, are organized in four main denominations, each distinguished by its Supreme Deity. For Vaiṣṇavites, Lord Viṣṇu is God. For Śaivites, God is Śiva. For Śāktas, Goddess Śakti is supreme. For Smārtas, liberal Hindus, the choice of Deity is left to the devotee. Each has a multitude of *guru* lineages, religious leaders, priesthoods, sacred literature, monastic communities, schools, pilgrimage centers and tens of thousands of temples. They possess a wealth of art and architecture, philosophy and scholarship. These four sects hold such divergent beliefs that each is a complete and independent religion. Yet, they share a vast heritage of culture and belief—*karma*, *dharma*, reincarnation, all-pervasive Divinity, temple worship, sacraments, manifold Deities, the *guru-śiṣya* tradition and the *Vedas* as scriptural authority. While India is home to most Hindus, large communities flourish worldwide. The *Vedas* elaborate, "He is Brahmā. He is Śiva. He is Indra. He is the immutable, the supreme, the self-luminous. He is Viṣṇu. He is life. He is time. He is the fire, and He is the moon." Aum Namah Śivāya.



## What Is the Deeply Mystical Śaiva Sect?

### ŚLOKA 7

Śaivism is the world's oldest religion. Worshiping God Śiva, the compassionate One, it stresses potent disciplines, high philosophy, the *guru's* centrality and *bhakti-rāja-siddha yoga* leading to oneness with Śiva within Aum.

### BHĀSHYA

Śaivism is ancient, truly ageless, for it has no beginning. It is the precursor of the many-faceted religion now termed Hinduism. Scholars trace the roots of Śiva worship back more than 8,000 years to the advanced Indus Valley civilization. But sacred writings tell us there never was a time when Śaivism did not exist. Modern history records six main schools: Śaiva Siddhānta, Pāśupatism, Kāshmīr Śaivism, Vīra Śaivism, Siddha Siddhānta and Śiva Advaita. Śaivism's grandeur and beauty are found in a practical culture, an enlightened view of man's place in the universe and a profound system of temple mysticism and *siddha yoga*. It provides knowledge of man's evolution from God and back to God, of the soul's unfoldment and awakening guided by enlightened sages. Like all the sects, its majority are devout families, headed by hundreds of orders of *swāmīs* and *sādhus* who follow the fiery, world-renouncing path to *moksha*. The *Vedas* state, "By knowing Śiva, the Auspicious One who is hidden in all things, exceedingly fine, like film arising from clarified butter, the One embracer of the universe—by realizing God, one is released from all fetters." Aum Namah Śivāya



## What Is the Magic and Power of Śāktism?

### ŚLOKA 8

Śāktism reveres the Supreme as the Divine Mother, Śakti or Devī, in Her many forms, both gentle and fierce. Śāktas use *mantra*, *tantra*, *yantra*, *yoga* and *pūjā* to invoke cosmic forces and awaken the *kundalinī* power. Aum.

### BHĀSHYA

While worship of the Divine Mother extends beyond the pale of history, Śākta Hinduism arose as an organized sect in India around the fifth century. Today it has four expressions—devotional, folk-shamanic, *yogic* and universalist—all invoking the fierce power of Kālī or Durgā, or the benign grace of Pārvatī or Ambikā. Śākta devotionalists use *pūjā* rites, especially to the *Śrī Chakra yantra*, to establish intimacy with the Goddess. Shamanic Śāktism employs magic, trance mediumship, firewalking and animal sacrifice for healing, fertility, prophecy and power. Śākta *yogīs* seek to awaken the sleeping Goddess Kundalinī and unite her with Śiva in the *sahasrāra chakra*. Śākta universalists follow the reformed Vedāntic tradition exemplified by Śrī Rāmakrishna. “Left-hand” *tantric* rites transcend traditional ethical codes. Śāktism is chiefly *advaitic*, defining the soul’s destiny as complete identity with the Unmanifest, Śiva. Central scriptures are the *Vedas*, *Śākta Āgamas* and *Purānas*. The *Devī Gītā* extols, “We bow down to the universal soul of all. Above and below and in all four directions, Mother of the universe, we bow.” Aum Chandikāyaḥ Namah.





## What Is the Devotional Vaishṇava Sect?

### ŚLOKA 9

Vaishnavism is an ancient Hindu sect centering on the worship of Lord Viṣṇu and His incarnations, especially Kṛṣṇa and Rāma. Largely dualistic, profoundly devotional, it is rich in saints, temples and scriptures. Aum.

### BHĀSHYA

The worship of Viṣṇu, meaning “pervader,” dates back to Vedic times. The Pañcharātra and Bhāgavata sects were popular prior to 300 BCE. Today’s five Vaishnava schools emerged in the middle ages, founded by Rāmānuja, Mādhva, Nimbārka, Vallabha and Chaitanya. Vaishnavism stresses *prapatti*, single-pointed surrender to Viṣṇu, or His ten or more incarnations, called *avatāras*. *Japa* is a key devotional *sādhana*, as is ecstatic chanting and dancing, called *kīrtana*. Temple worship and festivals are elaborately observed. Philosophically, Vaishnavism ranges from Mādhva’s pure dualism to Rāmānuja’s qualified nondualism to Vallabha’s nearly monistic vision. God and soul are everlastingly distinct. The soul’s destiny, through God’s grace, is to eternally worship and enjoy Him. While generally nonascetic, advocating *bhakti* as the highest path, Vaishnavism has a strong monastic community. Central scriptures are the *Vedas*, *Vaishnava Āgamas*, *Itihāsas* and *Purānas*. The *Bhagavad Gītā* states, “On those who meditate on Me and worship with undivided heart, I confer attainment of what they have not, and preserve what they have.” Aum Namo Nārāyaṇāya.



## What Is the Universalistic Smārta Sect?

### ŚLOKA 10

Smārtism is an ancient *brāhminical* tradition reformed by Śankara in the ninth century. Worshipping six forms of God, this liberal Hindu path is monistic, nonsectarian, meditative and philosophical. Aum Namah Śivāya

### BHĀSHYA

*Smārta* means a follower of classical *smṛiti*, particularly the *Dharma Śāstras*, *Purāṇas* and *Itihāsas*. Smārtas revere the *Vedas* and honor the *Āgamas*. Today this faith is synonymous with the teachings of Ādi Śankara, the monk-philosopher, known as *shanmata sthāpanāchārya*, “founder of the six-sect system.” He campaigned India-wide to consolidate the Hindu faiths of his time under the banner of Advaita Vedānta. To unify the worship, he popularized the ancient Smārta five-Deity altar—Ganapati, Sūrya, Viṣṇu, Śiva and Śakti—and added Kumāra. From these, devotees may choose their “preferred Deity,” or *Ishta Devatā*. Each God is but a reflection of the one Saguna Brahman. Śankara organized hundreds of monasteries into a ten-order, *daśanāmī* system, which now has five pontifical centers. He wrote profuse commentaries on the *Upanishads*, *Brahma Sūtras* and *Bhagavad Gītā*. Śankara proclaimed, “It is the one Reality which appears to our ignorance as a manifold universe of names and forms and changes. Like the gold of which many ornaments are made, it remains in itself unchanged. Such is Brahman, and That art Thou.” Aum Namah Śivāya

## Scriptures Speak on Religion

They call Him Indra, Mitra, Varuna, Agni or the heavenly sunbird  
Garutmat The seers call in many ways that which is One, they  
speak of Agni, Yama, Mātariśvan *Rig Veda*

Him who is without beginning and without end, in the  
midst of confusion, the Creator of all, of manifold form, the One  
embracer of the universe—by knowing God, one is  
released from all fetters *Yajur Veda*

Who by His grandeur has emerged sole sovereign of every  
living thing that breathes and slumbers, He who is Lord of man  
and four-legged creatures—what God shall we adore with our  
oblation? *Rig Veda*

The Primordial Vastness is the sky The Primordial Vastness is the  
sphere of space The Primordial Vastness is the mother, the father,  
the son The Primordial Vastness is all the Gods, the five sorts of  
men, all that was born and shall be born *Rig Veda*

May I attain to Vishnu's glorious mansion where the faithful  
rejoice, where, close beside the Strider, within His highest footstep  
springs the well of purest honey *Rig Veda*

I am the ruling Queen, the amasser of treasures, full of  
wisdom, first of those worthy of worship In various places, divine  
powers have set Me I enter many homes and take numerous  
forms *Rig Veda*

Whatever exists and wherever it exists is permeated by the same  
divine power and force *Yajur Veda*

Recognition of the world as the manifestation of Śakti  
is worship of Śakti Pure knowledge, unrelated to objects, is  
absolute

*Devikālottara Āgama*

When milk is poured into milk, oil into oil,  
water into water, they blend in absolute oneness So also the  
illuminated seer, the knower of the *ātman*, becomes one with  
the *ātman*

*Crest-Jewel of Discrimination*

Let us worship Him, the pure-formed One, the cloud which,  
emitting a rain of unthinkable joy, satiates the hearts and eyes of  
its followers, as if millions of rain clouds had poured down, the  
stay of the Great Silence, called by many names, described  
by many religions, the embodiment of ineffable degrees of  
spiritual happiness

*Tayumanavar*

Oh God of mercy who performs the dance of illimitable happiness  
in the hall of inconceivable Intelligence! Oh thou Preceptor who art  
named Nilakanṭha! Oh thou Preceptor of wisdom who art of the  
form of Vishnu! Oh thou Preceptor who art of the form of the  
four-headed Brahmā, the author of *Vedas*! O thou who discharges  
the duties of a Preceptor in all religions! Oh thou who as Preceptor  
enlightens in love those followers who have implored thee not to  
abandon them

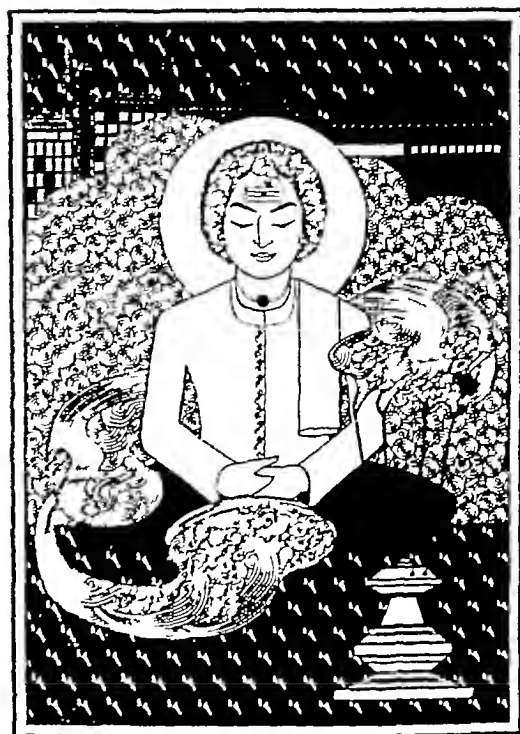
*Tayumanavar*

Give reverence to your tradition's God, who the whole world and  
all that lives pervades

*Natchintanai*

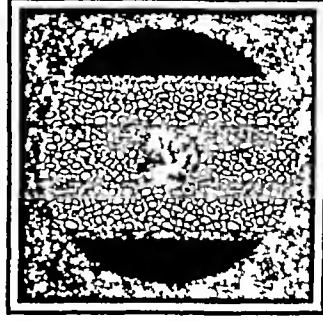
He is the Ancient One He created the beings of earth and  
heaven in days of yore in order divine The six faiths seek the feet  
but of the One Primal, Peerless God And in them all, He pervades  
in measure appropriate

*Tirumantiram*



Śaiva Dharma Maṇḍala

शैवधर्ममण्डल



Śaivite Hinduism

*Tripundra* is a Śaivite's great mark, three stripes of white *vibhūti* on the brow. This holy ash signifies purity and the burning away of *ānava*, *karma* and *māyā*. The *bindu*, or dot, at the third eye quickens spiritual insight. Aum





## What Is the Nature of Śaivite Theology?

### ŚLOKA 11

Śaivism proclaims· God Śiva is Love, both immanent and transcendent, both the creator and the creation. This world is the arena of our evolution, which leads by stages to *moksha*, liberation from birth and death Aum.

### BHĀSHYA

Śaivism is a unique religion in which God is both manifest and unmanifest, dual and nondual, within us and outside of us. It is not strictly pantheistic, polytheistic or monotheistic. Its predominant theology is known as monistic theism, panentheism, or Advaita Īsvaravāda Monism, the opposite of dualism, is the doctrine that reality is a one whole or existence without independent parts. Theism is belief in God and the Gods, both immanent and transcendent. Śaivism is monistic in its belief in a one reality and in the *advaitic*, or nondual, identity of man with that reality. Śaivism is theistic in its belief in the Gods, and in God Śiva as a loving, personal Lord, immanent in the world. Śaivism expresses the oneness of Pati-*paśu-pāśa*, God-soul-world, encompassing the nondual and the dual, faithfully carrying forth both Vedānta and Siddhānta, the pristine Sanātana Dharma of the *Vedas* and *Śaiva Āgamas*. The *Tirumantiram* states, “Śuddha Śaivas meditate on these as their religious path. Oneself, Absolute Reality and the Primal Soul, the categories three. God, soul and bonds, immaculate liberation and all that fetters the soul.” Aum Namah Śivāya



## How Do Śaivites Regard Other Faiths?

### ŚLOKA 12

Religious beliefs are manifold and different Śaivites, understanding the strength of this diversity, wholeheartedly respect and encourage all who believe in God. They honor the fact that Truth is one, paths are many Aum.

### BHĀSHYA

Since the inner intent of all religions is to bind man back to God, Śaivite Hindus seek not to interfere with anyone's faith or practice. We believe that there is no exclusive path, no one way for all. Śaivites profoundly know that God Śiva is the same Supreme Being in whom peoples of all faiths find solace, peace and liberation. Nonetheless, we realize that all religions are not the same. Each has its unique beliefs, practices, goals and paths of attainment, and the doctrines of one often conflict with those of another. Even this should never be cause for religious tension or intolerance. Śaivites respect all religious traditions and the people within them. They know that good citizens and stable societies are created from groups of religious people. Śaivite leaders support and participate in ecumenical gatherings with all religions. Still, Śaivites defend their faith, proceed contentedly with their practices and avoid the enchantment of other ways, be they ancient or modern. The *Vedas* explain, "Let us have concord with our own people, and concord with people who are strangers to us. Aśvins, create between us and the strangers a unity of hearts." Aum Namah Śivāya.



## How Does Śaivism Stay Contemporary?

### ŚLOKA 13

Inner truths never change, but outer forms of practice and observance do evolve Śaivism seeks to preserve its mystical teachings while adapting to the cultural, social and technological changes of each recurrent age Aum

### BHĀSHYA

Śaivism is an orthodox religion, conservative in its ways and yet pliant and understanding It is simultaneously the most demanding spiritual path and the most forgiving Śaivites have persisted through many ages through successfully adapting work, service and skills according to the times while internalizing worship and holding firmly to the eternal values. The outer form of service or occupation does not change the spiritual search Be he a skilled farmer, factory worker, village merchant, computer programmer or corporate executive, the Śaivite is served well by his religion Śaivism has all of the facilities for the education of humankind back to the Source Each futuristic age does not reflect a difference in the Śaivite's relationship with his family, *kula guru*, teacher, *satguru*, Gods or God in his daily religious life The Śaiva Dharma it is now as it always was The *Vedas* implore: "O self-luminous Divine, remove the veil of ignorance from before me, that I may behold your light Reveal to me the spirit of the scriptures May the truth of the scriptures be ever present to me May I seek day and night to realize what I learn from the sages" Aum Namah Śivāya



## What Is the Nature of Life for Śaivites?

### ŚLOKA 14

To the Śaivite Hindu, all of life is sacred All of life is religion. Thus, Śaivite art is sacred art, Śaivite music is devotional music, and the Śaivite's business is not only his livelihood, it is his service to man and God. Aum.

### BHĀSHYA

Each Śaivite is unique in his or her quest, yet all seek the same things in life. to be happy and secure, loved and appreciated, creative and useful. Śaivism has an established culture which fulfills these essential human wants and helps us understand the world and our place in it To all devotees it gives guidance in the qualities of character so necessary in spiritual life: patience, compassion, broad-mindedness, humility, industriousness and devotion Śaivism centers around the home and the temple Monastic life is its core and its power. Family life is strong and precious Śaivism possesses a wealth of art and architecture, traditions of music, art, drama and dance, and a treasury of philosophy and scholarship. Śaivite temples provide worship services daily Scriptures give ethical guidelines. *Satgurus* offer advanced spiritual initiation These three—temples, scriptures and *satgurus*—are our pillars of faith The *Vedas* implore, “O learned people, may we with our ears listen to what is beneficial, may we see with our eyes what is beneficial May we, engaged in your praises, enjoy with firm limbs and sound bodies, a full term of life dedicated to God” Aum Namah Śivāya





## What Is the Symbolism of Śiva's Dance?

### ŚLOKA 15

The symbolism of Śiva Natarāja is religion, art and science merged as one. In God's endless dance of creation, preservation, destruction and paired graces is hidden a deep understanding of our universe Aum Namah Śivāya

### BHĀSHYA

Natarāja, the King of Dance, has four arms. The upper right hand holds the drum from which creation issues forth. The lower right hand is raised in blessing, betokening preservation. The upper left hand holds a flame, which is destruction, the dissolution of form. The right leg, representing obscuring grace, stands upon Apas-mārapurusha, a soul temporarily earth-bound by its own sloth, confusion and forgetfulness. The uplifted left leg is revealing grace, which releases the mature soul from bondage. The lower left hand gestures toward that holy foot in assurance that Śiva's grace is the refuge for everyone, the way to liberation. The circle of fire represents the cosmos and especially consciousness. The all-devouring form looming above is Mahākāla, "Great Time." The cobra around Natarāja's waist is *kundalinī śakti*, the soul-impelling cosmic power resident within all. Natarāja's dance is not just a symbol. It is taking place within each of us, at the atomic level, this very moment. The Āgamas proclaim, "The birth of the world, its maintenance, its destruction, the soul's obscuration and liberation are the five acts of His dance." Aum Namah Śivāya

## Scriptures Speak on Śaivism

To the strong Rudra bring we these, our songs of praise, to  
Him the Lord of heroes, He with braided hair, that it be well with  
our cattle and our men, that in this village all be healthy  
and well fed

*Rīg Veda*

Instill in us a wholesome, happy mind, with goodwill and  
understanding Then shall we ever delight in your friendship like  
cows who gladly rejoice in meadows green  
This is my joyful message

*Rīg Veda*

He is the never-created creator of all He knows all  
He is pure consciousness, the creator of time, all-powerful,  
all-knowing He is the Lord of the soul and of nature and of the  
three conditions of nature From Him comes the transmigration  
of life and liberation, bondage in time and  
freedom in eternity

*Yajur Veda*

All this universe is in the glory of God, of Śiva, the God of  
love The heads and faces of men are His own, and He is in the  
hearts of all

*Yajur Veda*

God is, in truth, the whole universe what was, what is and what  
beyond shall ever be He is the God of life immortal and of all  
life that lives by food His hands and feet are everywhere He  
has heads and mouths everywhere He sees all, He hears all He  
is in all, and He Is

*Yajur Veda*

He is the God of forms infinite, in whose glory all things are,  
smaller than the smallest atom, and yet the creator of all, ever  
living in the mystery of His creation In the vision of this God of  
love there is everlasting peace

*Yajur Veda*

Devoid of beginning, duration and ending, by nature immaculate,  
powerful, omniscient, supremely perfect—thus is Śiva spoken of in  
Śaivite tradition *Ajita Āgama*

Unequalled, free from pain, subtle, all-pervading, unending,  
unchanging, incapable of decay, sovereign—such is the essence of  
Śiva, Lord of the summit of all paths *Svāyambhuva Āgama*

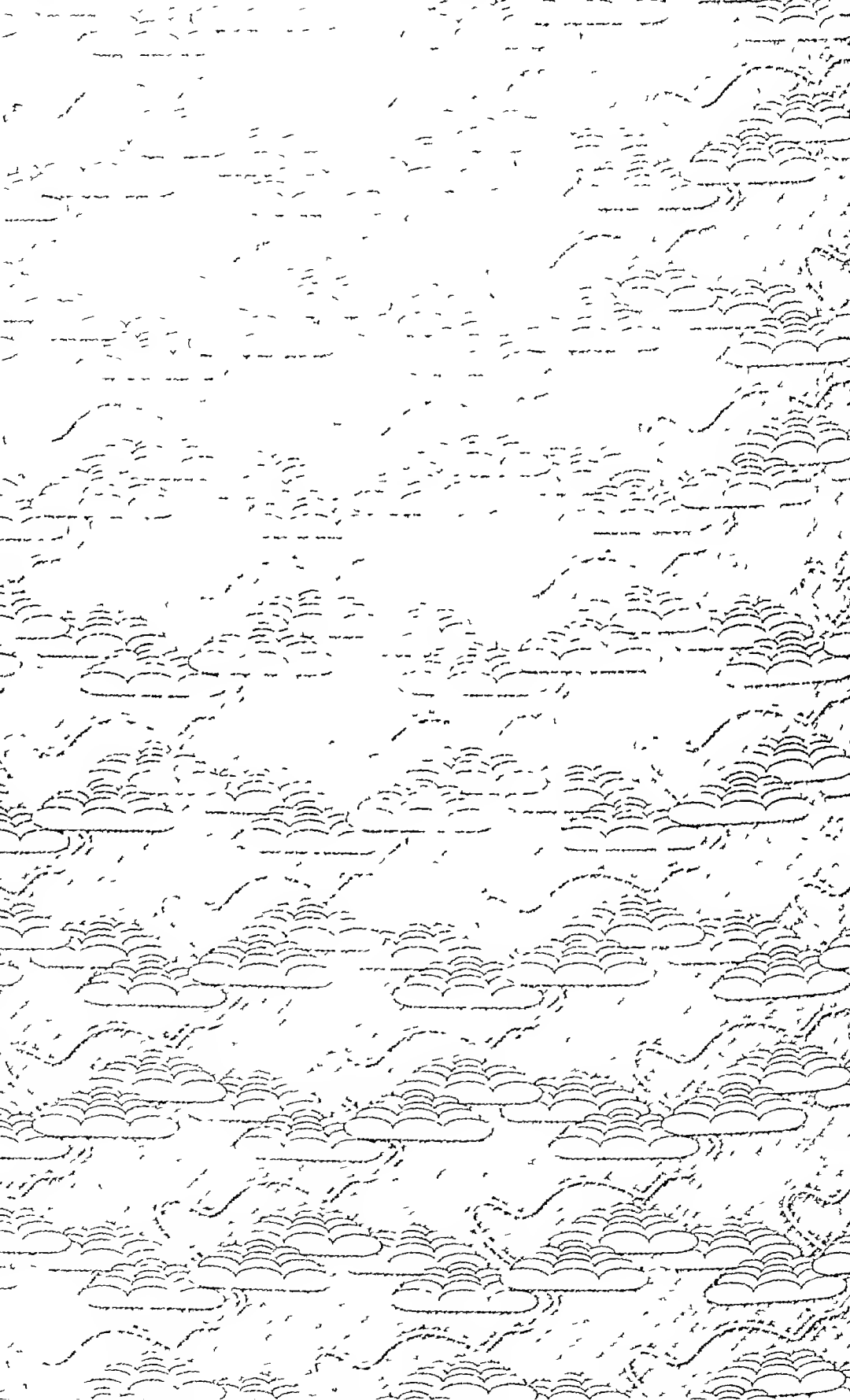
The path of Śiva is the proven path It led them to Hara  
It is the royal path that renowned souls have walked By this path  
divine, the devout pervade the universe That path do seek,  
enter and persevere *Tirumantiram*

They are not for outward form and attire,  
nor for pomp and ceremony Uprooting all bond and desire,  
abiding in the immaculate Lord, they bring to dire destruction the  
soul's egotry and its troublesome attachments They, indeed, are  
pure Śaivas *Tirumantiram*

If you could see the arch of his brow, the budding  
smile on lips red as the kovaī fruit, cool, matted hair, the  
milk-white ash on coral skin and the sweet golden foot raised  
up in dance, then even human birth on this wide earth would  
become a thing worth having *Tirumurai*

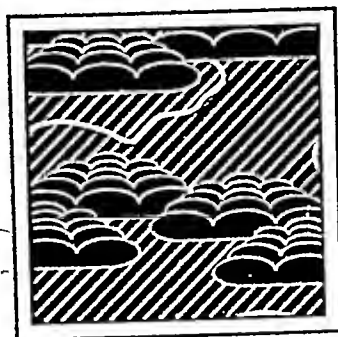
Hara, Hara! Śiva, Śiva, who in Thy lover's heart  
dost dwell, who art the essence of the *Vedas*! O wealth! O jewel!  
O beauteous king, our ruler whom the poets praise, who art  
commingled with the eyes that see and dost like the sunlight  
everything pervade! *Natchintanai*

With body as temple, with mind ever subject to Him, with  
truthfulness as purity, with the light of the mind as his Linga, with  
love as melted butter and milk together with the holy water, let us  
offer sacrifice to the Lord *Tirumurai*



Deva-Devatā Upanishad

देवदेवता उपनिषद्



God and Gods



# Śiva Maṇḍala शिवमण्डल



## Our Supreme God

*Natarāja* is Śiva as “King of Dance.” Carved in stone or cast in bronze, His *ānanda tāṇḍava*, the fierce ballet of bliss, dances the cosmos into and out of existence within the fiery arch of flames denoting consciousness Aum





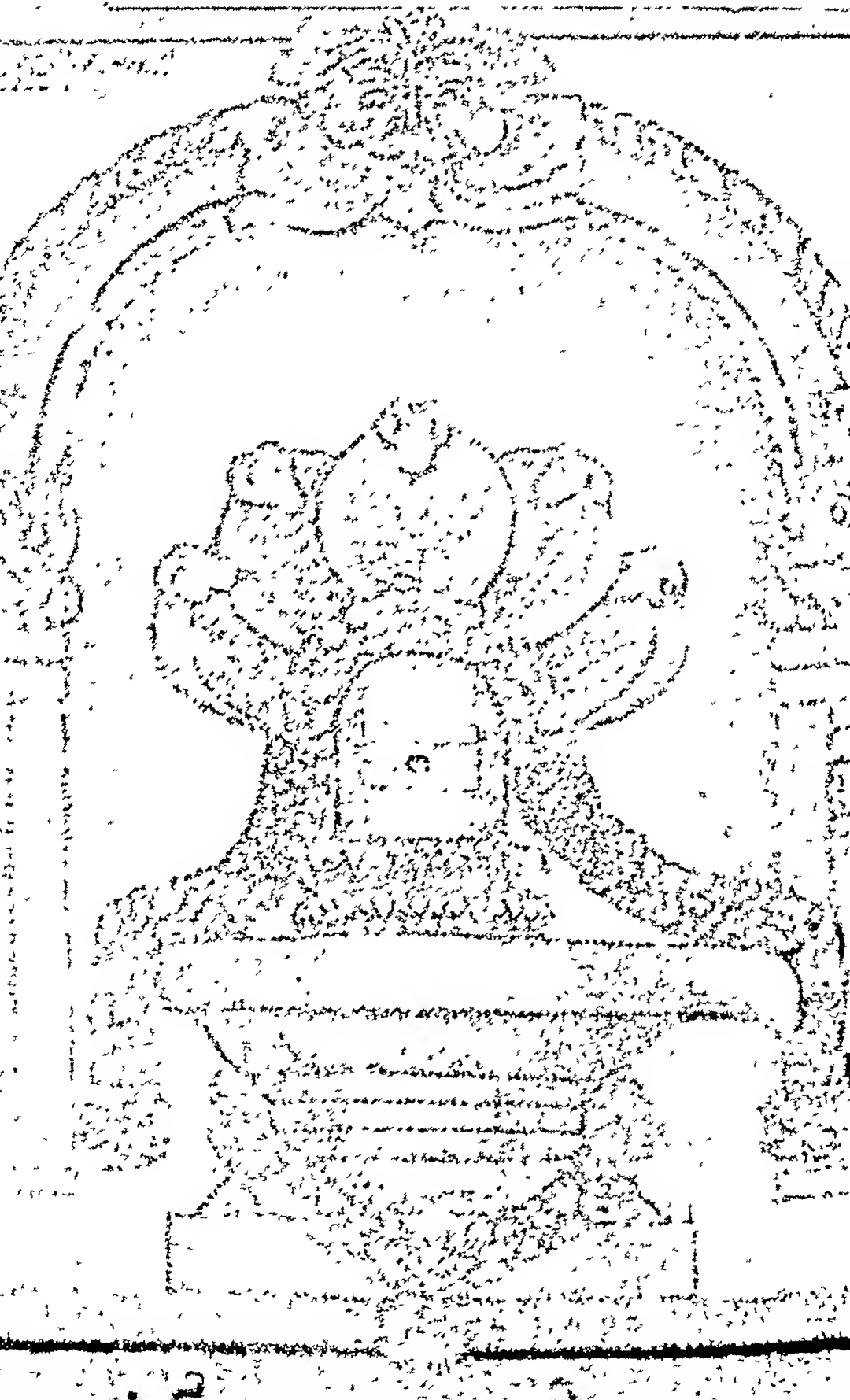
# What Is the Nature of Our God Śiva?

## ŚLOKA 16

God Śiva is all and in all, one without a second, the Supreme Being and only Absolute Reality. He is Pati, our Lord, immanent and transcendent To create, preserve, destroy, conceal and reveal are His five powers Aum

## BHĀSHYA

God Śiva is a one being, yet we understand Him in three perfections Absolute Reality, Pure Consciousness and Primal Soul As Absolute Reality, Śiva is unmanifest, unchanging and transcendent, the Self God, timeless, formless and spaceless As Pure Consciousness, Śiva is the manifest primal substance, pure love and light flowing through all form, existing everywhere in time and space as infinite intelligence and power. As Primal Soul, Śiva is the five-fold manifestation Brahmā, the creator; Vishnu, the preserver, Rudra, the destroyer, Maheśvara, the veiling Lord, and Sadāśiva, the revealer He is our personal Lord, source of all three worlds Our divine father-mother protects, nurtures and guides us, veiling Truth as we evolve, revealing it when we are mature enough to receive God's bountiful grace. God Śiva is all and in all, great beyond our conception, a sacred mystery that can be known in direct communion Yea, when Śiva is known, all is known. The *Vedas* state "That part of Him which is characterized by *tamas* is called Rudra That part of Him which belongs to *rajas* is Brahmā That part of Him which belongs to *sattva* is Vishnu" Aum Namah Śivāya



## What Is God Śiva's Unmanifest Reality?

### ŚLOKA 17

Paraśiva is God Śiva's Unmanifest Reality or Absolute Being, distinguished from His other two perfections, which are manifest and of the nature of form. Paraśiva is the fullness of everything, the absence of nothing Aum.

### BHĀSHYA

Paraśiva, the Self God, must be realized to be known, does not exist, yet seems to exist, yet existence itself and all states of mind, being and experiential patterns could not exist but for this ultimate reality of God. Such is the great mystery that *yogīs*, *rishis*, saints and sages have realized through the ages. To discover Paraśiva, the *yogī* penetrates deep into contemplation. As thoughts arise in his mind, mental concepts of the world or of the God he seeks, he silently repeats, "*Neti, neti*—it is not this, it is not that." His quieted consciousness expands into Sat-chidānanda. He is everywhere, permeating all form in this blissful state. He remembers his goal, which lies beyond bliss, and holds firmly to "*Neti, neti*—this is not that for which I seek." Through *prānāyāma*, through *mantra*, through *tantra*, wielding an indomitable will, the last forces of form, time and space subside, as the *yogī*, deep in *nirvikalpa samādhi*, merges into Paraśiva. The *Vedas* explain, "Self-resplendent, formless, unoriginated and pure, that all-pervading being is both within and without. He transcends even the transcendent, unmanifest, causal state of the universe." Aum Namah Śivāya



## What Is God Śiva's Pure Consciousness?

### ŚLOKA 18

Parāśakti is pure consciousness, the substratum or primal substance flowing through all form. It is Śiva's inscrutable presence, the ultimate ground and being of all that exists, without which nothing could endure. Aum.

### BHĀSHYA

Parāśakti, "Supreme Energy," is called by many names: silence, love, being, power and all-knowingness. It is Satchidānanda—existence-consciousness-bliss—that pristine force of being which is undifferentiated, totally aware of itself, without an object of its awareness. It radiates as divine light, energy and knowing. Out of Paraśiva ever comes Parāśakti, the first manifestation of mind, superconsciousness or infinite knowing. God Śiva knows in infinite, all-abiding, loving superconsciousness. Śiva knows from deep within all of His creations to their surface. His Being is within every animate and inanimate form. Should God Śiva remove His all-pervasive Parāśakti from any one or all of the three worlds, they would crumble, disintegrate and fade away. Śiva's Śakti is the sustaining power and presence throughout the universe. This unbounded force has neither beginning nor end. Verily, it is the Divine Mind of Lord Śiva. The *Vedas* say, "He is God, hidden in all beings, their inmost soul who is in all. He watches the works of creation, lives in all things, watches all things. He is pure consciousness, beyond the three conditions of nature." Aum Namah Śivāya.



## What Are God Śiva's Traditional Forms?

### ŚLOKA 20

Our adoration of the one great God Śiva is directed toward diverse images and icons. Primary among them are Śivalinga, Natarāja, Ardhanārīśvara, Dakshināmūrti, Hari-Hara, Bhairava and the *triśūla*. Aum Namah Śivāya

### BHĀSHYA

Every form is a form of Śiva. Tradition has given us several of special sacredness. The Śivalinga was the first image of Divinity. After it all other icons evolved from mystic visions. We contemplate God Śiva as Paraśiva when we worship the Śivalinga. Its simple elliptical shape speaks silently of God's unspeakable Absolute Being. We exalt Śiva as Parāśakti or Satchidānanda, God's living omnipresence, when we worship any form of His never-separate Śakti, especially Ardhanārīśvara, whose right half is masculine and left half is feminine, and in whom all opposites are reconciled. We adore Him as Parameśvara, the Primal Soul, when we worship Natarāja, the Divine Dancer who animates the universe. Thus we worship Śiva's three perfections in three forms, yet knowing that He is a one Being, fully present in each of them. He is also Dakshināmūrti, the silent teacher; Hari-Hara—half-Śiva, half-Vishnu—and Bhairava, the fierce wielder of *triśūla*, the trident of love, wisdom and action. The *Tirumantiram* declares, "Everywhere is the Holy Form. Everywhere is Śiva-Śakti. Everywhere is Chidambaram, Everywhere is Divine Dance." Aum Namah Śivāya



## Scriptures Speak on Śiva

There the eye goes not, nor words, nor mind. We know not  
We cannot understand how He can be explained. He is above the  
known, and He is above the unknown. Thus have we heard from  
the ancient sages who explained this truth to us. *Sāma Veda*

This *ātman* is the Lord of all beings, the King of  
all beings. Just as the spokes are fixed in the hub and the rim  
of a chariot wheel, in the same way all these beings, all the  
Gods, all the worlds, all life breaths, all these selves, are  
fixed in the *ātman* *Yajur Veda*

Fire is His head, the sun and moon His eyes, space His ears,  
the *Vedas* His speech, the wind His breath, the universe His heart.  
From His feet the earth has originated. Verily, He is the inner  
Self of all beings *Atharva Veda*

He, the Self, is not this, not this. He is ungraspable, for He is not  
grasped. He is indestructible, for He cannot be destroyed, He is  
unattached, for He does not cling to anything. He is unbound, He  
does not suffer, nor is He injured *Yajur Veda*

'To Rudra, Lord of sacrifice, of hymns and balmy  
medicines, we pray for joy and health and strength. He shines in  
splendor like the sun, refulgent as bright gold is He, the good, the  
best among the Gods *Rig Veda*

Now, that golden Person who is seen within the sun has a golden  
beard and golden hair. He is exceedingly brilliant all, even to the  
fingernail tips. His eyes are even as a Kapyasa lotus flower. His  
name is high. He is raised high above all evils. Verily, he who knows  
this rises high above all evils *Sāma Veda*

The bodily form of the Almighty, being constituted of powers, is not comparable to ours. Most conspicuous is the absence of *ānava*. His bodily form, having a head, etc., is composed of five *mantras*, corresponding each to the five activities—*Īśa*, *Tat* *Purusha*, *Aghora*, *Vāma* and *Aja* *Mrigendra Āgama*

As movement within wind, as sugar within sugarcane, as *ghee* within milk, as juice within fruit, as fragrance within flower, thus does the Lord pervade all *Tirumantiram*

Himself creates Himself preserves Himself destroys  
Himself obscures Himself, all these He does and then grants  
*mukti*—Himself the all-pervading Lord *Tirumantiram*

An earring of bright, new gold glows on one ear,  
a coiled conch shell sways on the other. On one side He chants  
the melodies of the ritual *Veda*, on the other He gently smiles.  
Matted hair adorned with sweet *konrai* blossoms on one half of His  
head, and a woman's curls on the other, He comes. The one is the  
nature of His form, the other, of Hers, and both are the very  
essence of His beauty *Tirumurai*

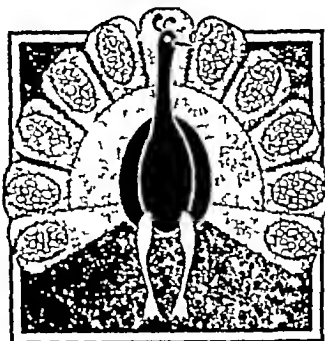
Bearing *Gangā* on spreading, matted locks, the forehead eye  
sparkling, the breath spirating as tempestuous wind, the  
immaculate form shining radiant as the clear sky, the holy feet  
stretching to the ends of earth, the blemishless heart serving as  
pedestal, the *Vedas* chanting aloud of themselves, the right hand  
that grants refuge and the left hand that grants favors both  
appropriately gesturing, the *nāda* sound of drum filling the air all  
around—thus *Śiva* dances *Tayumanavar*

Love of *Śiva*'s feet eradicates bad *karma*. Love of *Śiva*'s feet grants  
you clarity of mind. Love of *Śiva*'s feet imbues the heart with  
gladness. Love of *Śiva*'s feet is consciousness itself *Natchintanai*



Gaṇeśa-Kārttikeya Maṇḍala

गणेशकर्त्तिकेयमण्डल



Lords of Dharma

*Mayūra*, “peacock,” is Lord Murugan’s mount, swift and beautiful like Kārttikeya Himself. The proud display of the dancing peacock symbolizes religion in full, unfolded glory. His shrill cry warns of approaching harm. Aum



## Do Other Gods Exist Apart from Śiva?

### ŚLOKA 21

Supreme God Śiva has created all the Gods and given them distinct existence and powers, and yet He pervades them wholly. They are separate but inseparable. At the deepest level, nothing exists apart from Him. Aum

### BHĀSHYA

God Śiva is the Supreme Being, the Lord of lords. He alone prevails everywhere. Not an atom moves except by His will. Ganeśa, Kārttikeya, Indra, Agni and all the 330 million Gods of Hinduism are beings just as we are, created by Lord Śiva and destined to enjoy union with Him. The Gods are souls of high evolution. They are very old and mature souls, mighty beings who live in the Śivaloka. Though neither male nor female, they may be popularly depicted as Gods and Goddesses. The *devas* are benevolent beings of light abiding in the higher Antarloka. They help guide evolution from their world between births. The *asuras* are demonic beings of darkness, immature souls who temporarily inhabit Naraka, the lower Antarloka. *Devas* and *asuras* are usually subject to rebirth. We worship Śiva and the Gods. We neither worship the *devas* nor invoke the *asuras*. Kārttikeya, Ganeśa and all the Gods, *devas* and *asuras* worship Śiva. The *Vedas* explain, "From Him, also, are born the Gods, in manifold ways, the celestials, men, cattle, birds, the in-breath and the out-breath, rice and barley, austerity, faith, truth, chastity and the law." Aum Namah Śivāya

मल्लिकार्जुनस्य पश्यन्तस्त्विति प्रत्यक्षम् ॥  
 नन्दप्रसन्नकुमिसरनारसुषुप्तम् ॥ दे॥  
 मल्लिकार्जुनस्य कीर्त्तितत्त्वकाव्यम् ॥  
 योतरे सद्यः ॥ छह ॥ ॥



## What Is the Nature of Lord Gaṇeśa?

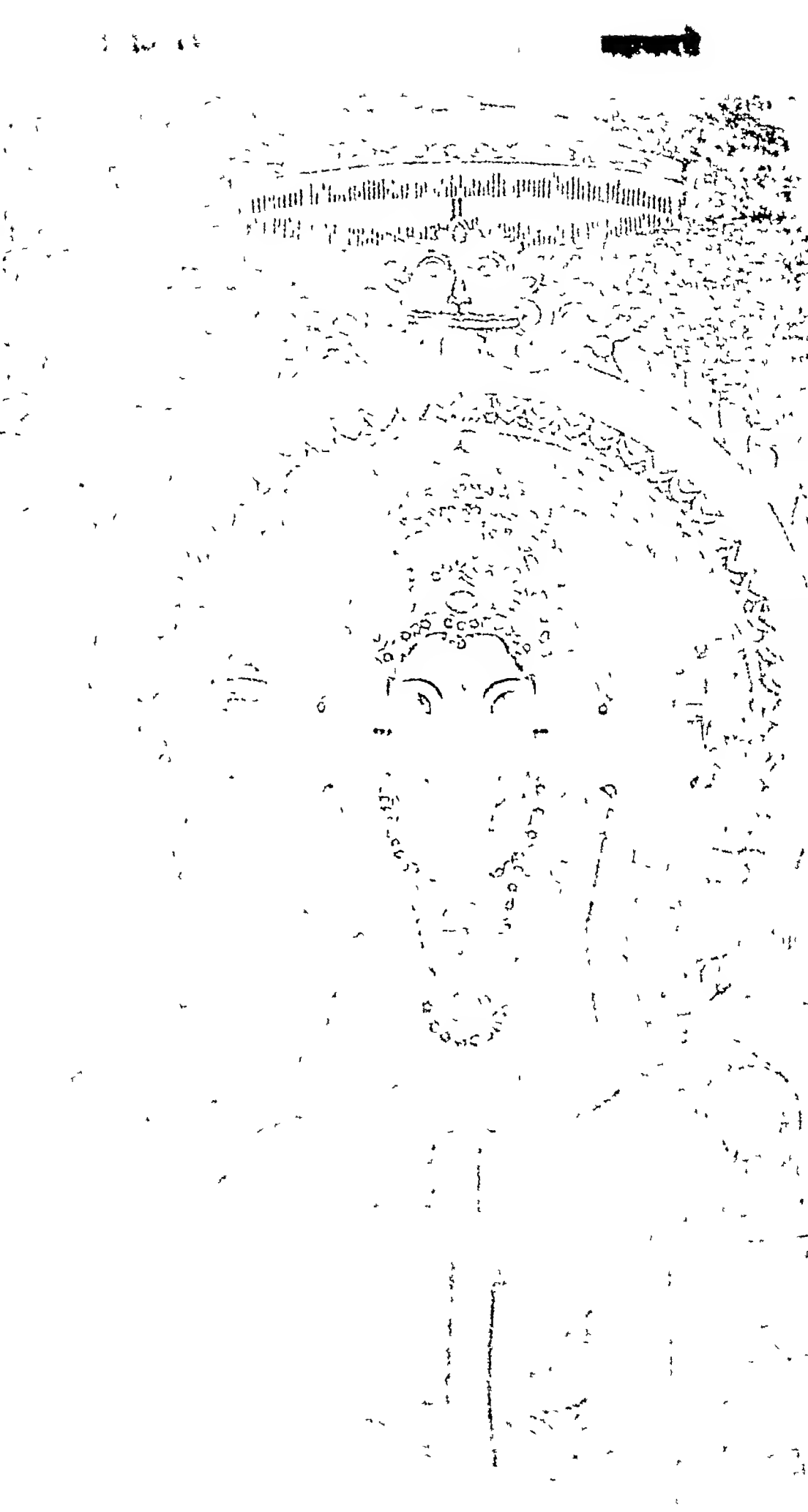
### ŚLOKA 22

Lord Gaṇeśa is the elephant-faced Patron of Art and Science, the Lord of Obstacles and Guardian of Dharma. His will prevails as the force of righteousness, the embodiment of Śiva's *karmic* law in all three worlds. Aum

### BHĀSHYA

Lord Śiva, the Almighty Power, created heaven and earth and the God Lord Gaṇeśa to oversee the intricate *karmas* and *dharma*s within the heavens and all the earths. Lord Gaṇeśa was created as a governor and interplanetary, intergalactic Lord. His knowledge is infinite, His judgment is just. It is none other than Lord Gaṇeśa and His mighty band of *ganas* who gently help souls out of the Naraka abyss and adjust them into higher consciousness after due penance has been paid, guiding them on the right path toward *dharmic* destiny. He is intricate of mind, loving pomp, delighting in all things sweet and enjoying adulation. Lord Śiva proclaimed that this son be worshiped first, even before Himself. Verily, He is the Lord of Karma. All Mahādevas, minor Gods, *devas* and sentient beings must worship Gaṇeśa before any responsible act could hope to be successful. Those who do not are subject to their own barriers. Yea, worship of Him sets the pattern of one's destiny. The *Tirumantiram* says, "Five-armed is He, elephant-faced with tusks protruding, crescent-shaped, son of Śiva, wisdom's flower, in heart enshrined, His feet I praise" Aum Namah Śivāya





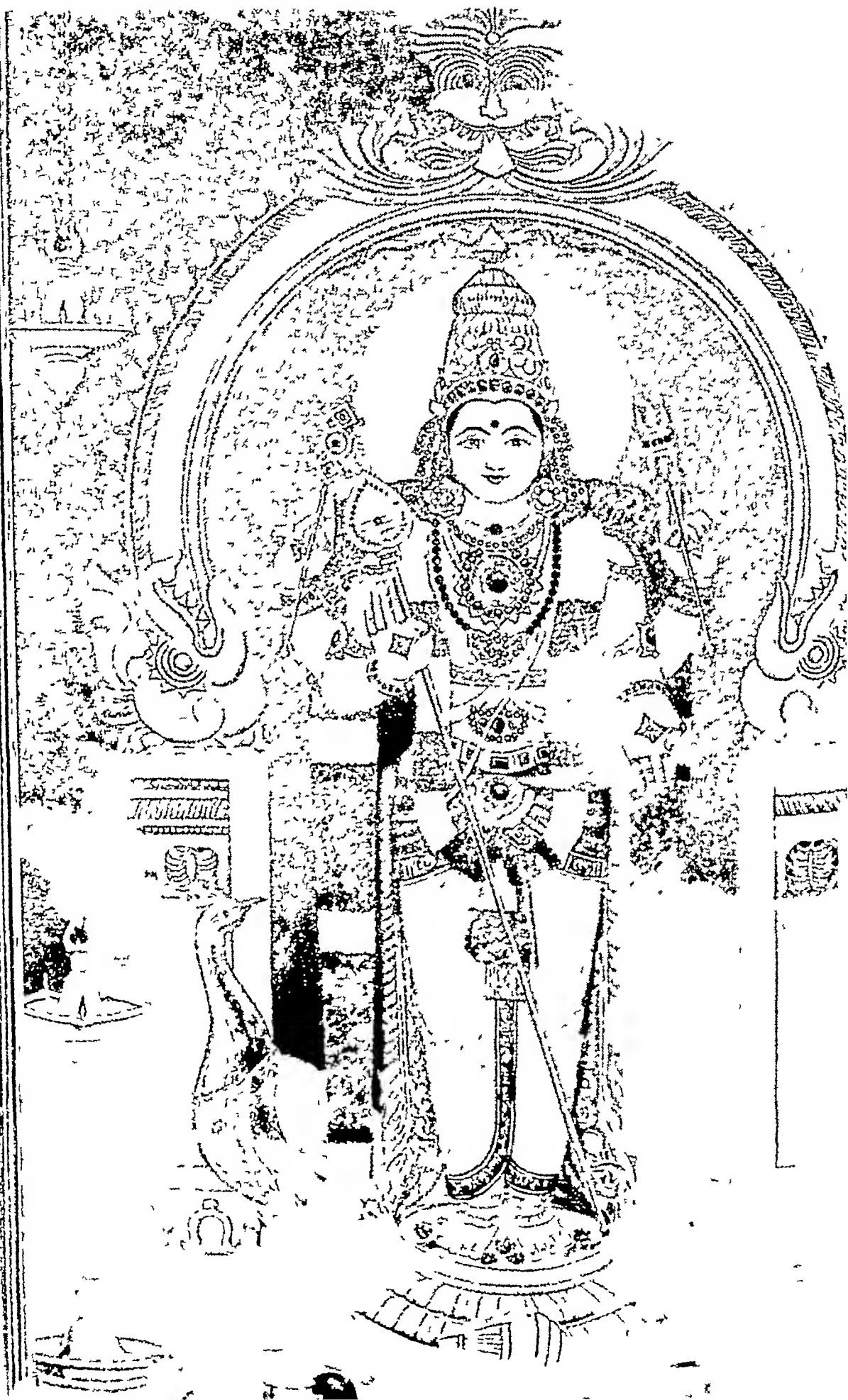
## What Is Lord Gaṇeśa's Special Duty?

### ŚLOKA 23

As Lord of Obstacles, Gaṇeśa wields the noose and the goad, icons of His benevolent power of preventing or permitting events to happen in our life. Thus, we invoke His grace and wisdom before any worship or task. Aum.

### BHĀSHYA

Lord Gaṇeśa, the God of time and memory, strategically seated on the *mūlādhāra chakra*, poised between the higher and lower *chakras*, stabilizes all sentient beings. He holds the architect's plans of the divine masterpiece of universal past and future. Only good comes from Lord Gaṇeśa, who by taking the form of an elephant distinguishes Himself from other Gods. The *charyā pāda* begins with His worship. He staves off misfortune for those who perform penance in His name. He guides our *kar-ma* from within us through the timing of events. Before any important undertaking, we supplicate Him to clear obstacles from the path, if it be His will. This Lord of Obstacles prevents us from hurting ourselves through living under an incomplete concept or making a request unneeded or beginning an endeavor not well thought out. Before we petition Him, He expects us to use all of our faculties to arrive at the decision. He would have made. The *Āgamas* declare, "These Lords who, it is said, on the pure path, attend to the various duties deriving from a higher realm of *māyā* are at the prow of the effects of the higher realm of *māyā*." Aum Namah Śivāya



## What Is the Nature of Lord Kārttikeya?

### ŚLOKA 24

Lord Kārttikeya, Murugan, first *guru* and Pleiadean master of *kundalinī yoga*, was born of God Śiva's mind. His dynamic power awakens spiritual cognition to propel souls onward in their evolution to Śiva's feet. Aum

### BHĀSHYA

Lord Kārttikeya flies through the mind's vast substance from planet to planet. He could well be called the Emancipator, ever available to the call of those in distress. Lord Kārttikeya, God of will, direct cognition and the purest, child-like divine love, propels us onward on the righteous way through religion, His Father's law. Majestically seated on the *manipūra chakra*, this scarlet-hued God blesses mankind and strengthens our will when we lift to the inner sky through *sādhana* and *yoga*. The *yoga pāda* begins with the worship of Him. The *yogī*, locked in meditation, venerates Kārttikeya, Skanda, as his mind becomes as calm as Śaravana, the lake of Divine Essence. The *kundalinī* force within everyone is held and controlled by this powerful God, first among renunciates, dear to all *sannyāsins*. Revered as Murugan in the South, He is commander in chief of the great devonic army, a fine, dynamic soldier of the within, a fearless defender of righteousness. He is Divinity emulated in form. The *Vedas* say, "To such a one who has his stains wiped away, the venerable Sanatkumāra shows the further shore of darkness. Him they call Skanda." Aum Namah Śivāya



## What Does Lord Kārttikeya's Vel Signify?

### ŚLOKA 25

The lancelike *vel* wielded by Lord Kārttikeya, or Skanda, embodies discrimination and spiritual insight. Its blade is wide, long and keen, just as our knowledge must be broad, deep and penetrating. Aum Namah Śivāya

### BHĀSHYA

The *śakti* power of the *vel*, the eminent, intricate power of righteousness over wrongdoing, conquers confusion within the realms below. The holy *vel*, that when thrown always hits its mark and of itself returns to Kārttikeya's mighty hand, rewards us when righteousness prevails and becomes the *kundalinī* serpent's unleashed power thwarting our every effort with punishing remorse when we transgress *dharma's* law. Thus, the holy *vel* is our release from ignorance into knowledge, our release from vanity into modesty, our release from sinfulness into purity through *tapas*. When we perform penance and beseech His blessing, this merciful God hurls His *vel* into the astral plane, piercing discordant sounds, colors and shapes, removing the mind's darkness. He is the King of kings, the power in their scepters. Standing behind the temporal majesty, He advises and authorizes. His *vel* empowering the ruler, justice prevails, wisdom enriches the minds of citizens, rain is abundant, crops flourish and plenty fills the larders. The *Tirumurai* says, "In the gloom of fear, His six-fold face gleams. In perils unbounded, His *vel* betokens, 'Fear not'." Aum Namah Śivāya

## Scriptures Speak on Lords of Dharma

As the God evoked faith from the mighty *asuras*, so may my prayer  
for the generous worshiper be accepted! *Rig Veda*

He who is source and origin of the Gods, the Lord of all, Rudra, the  
Mighty Sage who produced in ancient days the Golden Germ—  
may He endow us with purity of mind! *Yajur Veda*

Great are the Gods who were born from Nonbeing Yet men  
aver this Nonbeing to be the single limb of the Support, the great  
Beyond *Atharva Veda*

In whose one limb all the Gods, three and thirty in number, are  
affixed—tell me of that Support—who may He be? *Atharva Veda*

“Agni, Vāyu, Āditya who is the time (Prajāpati), *prāṇa*, food,  
Brahmā, Rudra, Viṣṇu From among these, some, meditating,  
adore one, others another Please tell us who among them is  
adored most, who is He?” Then he said to them “These, indeed,  
are the foremost appeared forms of the highest, immortal,  
incorporeal Brahman” *Yajur Veda*

In Him exists neither action nor organ of action, no one is  
found His equal or superior to Him His supreme power is revealed  
in manifold forms, inherent to His nature is the working of His  
strength and wisdom *Yajur Veda*

I'll not sell you, not for a thousand or ten thousand pieces! O  
Indra, you are more to me than a father I count a brother naught  
compared to you You and a mother, O Bountiful, vie with each  
other in generous giving and in bestowal of joy *Rig Veda*

In the heart of those who recount His name, He reveals His  
gracious feet Thus He appears to those who chant the hallowed  
name *Murugan* He stands immanent in all *Tirumurai*

The moon, sun and fire are in unison radiating their resplendent  
effulgence Radiating the luminous sparks is Murugan, who lights  
up the world by His peerless light *Kathirgama Purāna*

Let us know that Supreme Being and meditate upon  
Him, the Supreme General of the great *deva* army May  
He enlighten us and lead us to be one with Him,  
Lord Skanda *Shannukha Gāyatrī*

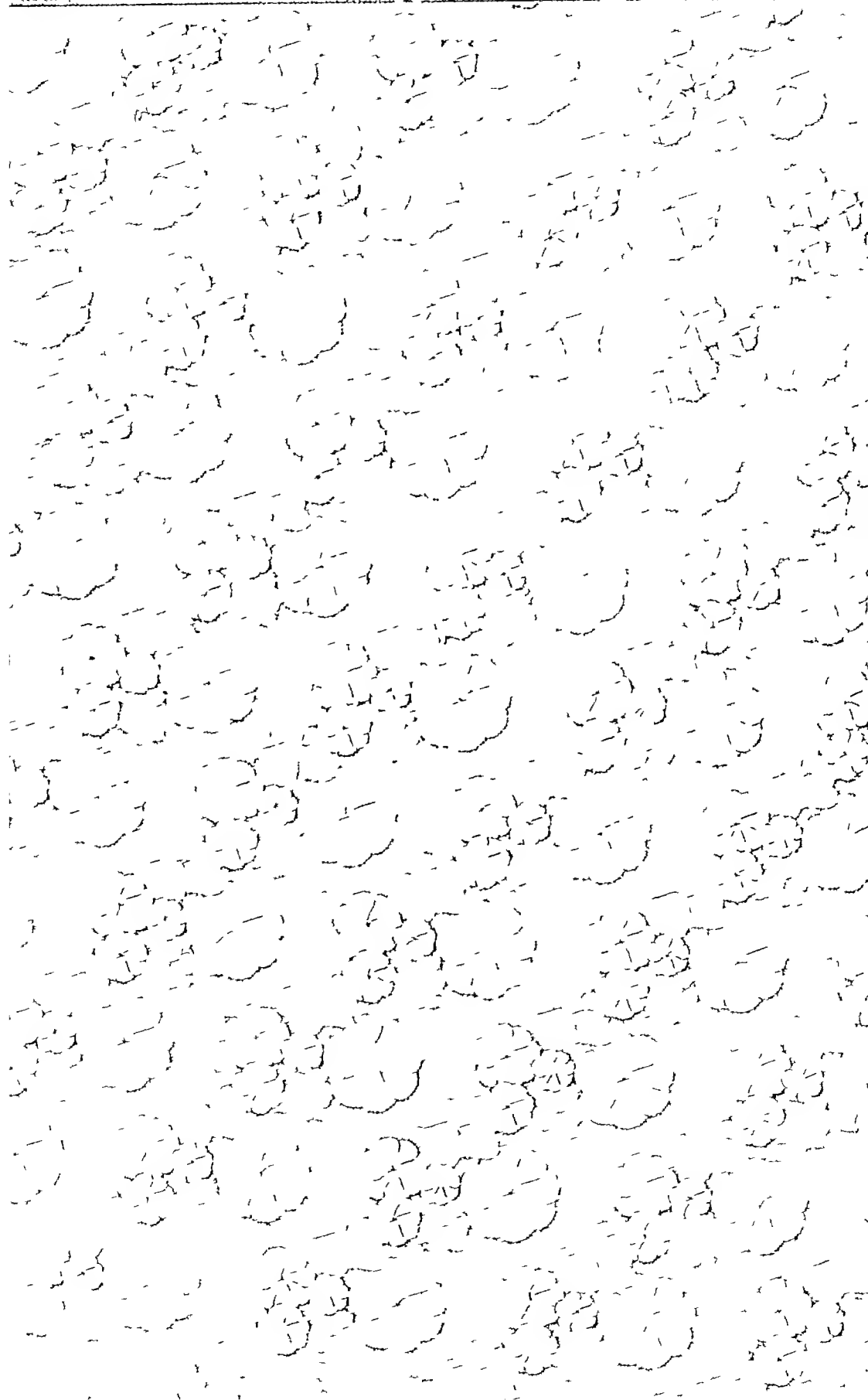
If you worship the elephant-faced Vināyaka, your life will expand  
bountifully If you worship the white-tusked Vināyaka, your desire  
and doubts will flee Therefore, worship Him with love-offerings of  
jack, hoppers, plantain and mango fruits and thus mitigate the  
burden of deeds *Samt Auvaṛyar*

He has one tusk and four arms Two of His hands hold a noose and  
a hook, while the other hands show the gestures of removing fear  
and granting boons A mouse is seen on His flag Red, obese, He  
has ears like winnowing baskets He is dressed in red, with limbs  
painted with red sandalpaste *Ganapati Upanishad*

Murugan, Kumāran, Guhan—to utter and melt and have divine  
experience—when shall Thou grant this, O *guru* supreme,  
worshiped by the *devas* devout and mortals alike, O abode of  
virtues eight! *Kandar Anubhuti*

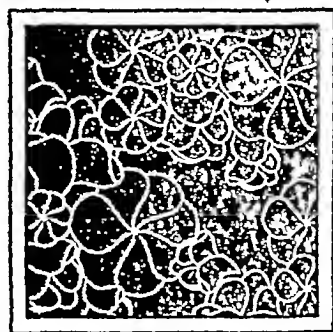
The God with the elephantine visage I shall never forget—  
Śankara's son, with massive belly and the *thodu* in His ear,  
the Lord who gave His grace to Indra, of whom *mantra*  
is His very form *Natchintanai*





Amṛitātma Upanishad

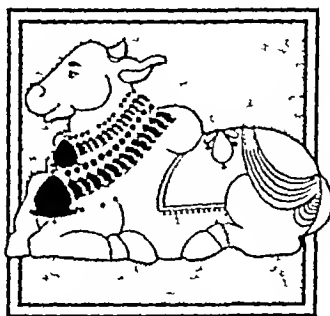
अमृतात्म उपनिषद्



**Our Immortal Soul**



# Ātmasvarūpa Maṇḍala आत्मस्वरूपमण्डल



## The Nature of the Soul

*Nandi* is Lord Śiva's mount, or *vāhana*. This huge white bull with a black tail, whose name means "joyful," disciplined animality kneeling at Śiva's feet, is the ideal devotee, the pure joy and strength of Śaiva Dharma. Aum



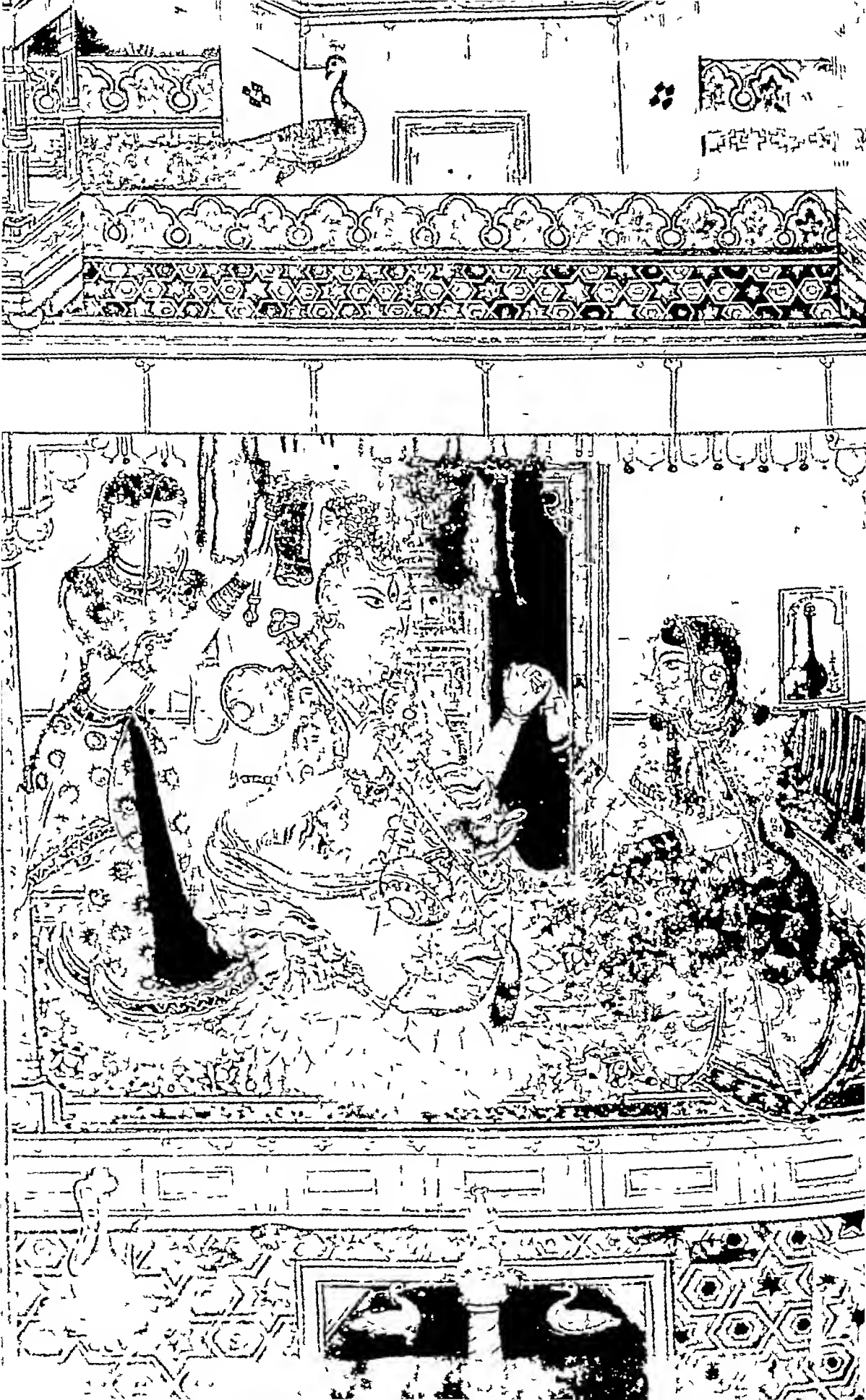
## What Is Our Individual Soul Nature?

### ŚLOKA 26

Our individual soul is the immortal and spiritual body of light that animates life and reincarnates again and again until all necessary *karmas* are created and resolved and its essential unity with God is fully realized Aum

### BHĀSHYA

Our soul is God Śiva's emanational creation, the source of all our higher functions, including knowledge, will and love Our soul is neither male nor female It is that which never dies, even when its four outer sheaths—physical, *prāṇic*, instinctive and mental—change form and perish as they naturally do The physical body is the *annamaya kośa* The *prāṇic* sheath of vitality is the *prāṇamaya kośa* The instinctive-intellectual sheath is the *manomaya kośa* The mental, or cognitive, sheath is the *vijñānamaya kośa* The inmost soul body is the blissful, ever-giving-wisdom *ānandamaya kośa* Parāśakti is the soul's superconscious mind—God Śiva's mind Paraśiva is the soul's inmost core We are not the physical body, mind or emotions We are the immortal soul, *ātman* The sum of our true existence is *ānandamaya kośa* and its essence, Parāśakti and Paraśiva The *Vedas* expostulate, "The soul is born and unfolds in a body, with dreams and desires and the food of life And then it is reborn in new bodies, in accordance with its former works The quality of the soul determines its future body, earthly or airy, heavy or light" Aum Namah Śivāya



## How Is Our Soul Different from Śiva?

### ŚLOKA 27

Our soul body was created in the image and likeness of the Primal Soul, God Śiva, but it differs from the Primal Soul in that it is immature. While Śiva is unevolutionary perfection, we are in the process of evolving. Aum

### BHĀSHYA

To understand the mysteries of the soul, we distinguish between the soul body and its essence. As a soul body, we are individual and unique, different from all others, a self-effulgent being of light which evolves and matures through an evolutionary process. This soul body is of the nature of God Śiva, but is different from Śiva in that it is less resplendent than the Primal Soul and still evolving, while God is unevolutionary perfection. We may liken the soul body to an acorn, which contains the mighty oak tree but is a small seed yet to develop. The soul body matures through experience, evolving through many lives into the splendor of God Śiva, ultimately realizing Śiva totally in *nirvikalpa samādhi*. Even after Self Realization is attained, the soul body continues to evolve in this and other worlds until it merges with the Primal Soul, as a drop of water merges with its source, the ocean. Yea, this is the destiny of all souls without exception. The *Vedas* say, "As oil in sesame seeds, as butter in cream, as water in river beds, as fire in friction sticks, so is the *ātman* grasped in one's own self when one searches for Him with truthfulness and austerity." Aum Namah Śivāya





## How Is Our Soul Identical with Śiva?

### ŚLOKA 28

The essence of our soul, which was never created, is immanent love and transcendent reality and is identical and eternally one with God Śiva. At the core of our being, we already are That—perfect at this very moment Aum.

### BHĀSHYA

At the core of the subtle soul body is Parāśakti, or Sat-chidānanda, immanent love; and at the core of that is Paraśiva, transcendent reality. At this depth of our being there exists no separate identity or difference—all are One. Thus, deep within our soul we are identical with God now and forever. These two divine perfections are not aspects of the evolving soul, but the nucleus of the soul which does not change or evolve. From an absolute perspective, our soul is already in nondual union with God, but to be realized to be known. We are That. We do not become That. Deep within this physical body, with its turbulent emotions and getting-educated mind, is pure perfection identical to Śiva's own perfections of Parāśakti and Paraśiva. In this sacred mystery we find the paradoxes of oneness and twoness, of being and becoming, of created and uncreated existence subtly delineated. Yea, in the depth of our being, we are as He is. The *Vedas* explain, "The one controller, the inner Self of all things, who makes His one form manifold, to the wise who perceive Him as abiding in the soul, to them is eternal bliss—to no others." Aum Namah Śivāya



## Why Are We Not Omniscient Like Śiva?

### ŚLOKA 29

The three bonds of *ānava*, *karma* and *māyā* veil our sight. This is Śiva's purposeful limiting of awareness which allows us to evolve. In the superconscious depths of our soul, we share God Śiva's all-knowingness. Aum.

### BHĀSHYA

Just as children are kept from knowing all about adult life until they have matured into understanding, so too is the soul's knowledge limited. We learn what we need to know, and we understand what we have experienced. Only this narrowing of our awareness, coupled with a sense of individualized ego, allows us to look upon the world and our part in it from a practical, human point of view. *Pāśa* is the soul's triple bondage. *māyā*, *karma* and *ānava*. Without the world of *māyā*, the soul could not evolve through experience. *Karma* is the law of cause and effect, action and reaction governing *māyā*. *Ānava* is the individuating veil of duality, source of ignorance and finitude. *Māyā* is the classroom, *karma* the teacher, and *ānava* the student's ignorance. The three bonds, or *malas*, are given by Lord Śiva to help and protect us as we unfold. Yet, God Śiva's all-knowingness may be experienced for brief periods by the meditator who turns within to his own essence. The *Tirumantiram* explains, "When the soul attains Self-knowledge, then it becomes one with Śiva. The *malas* perish, birth's cycle ends and the lustrous light of wisdom dawns." Aum Namah Śivāya



## How Do Hindus Understand Moksha?

### ŚLOKA 30

The destiny of all souls is *moksha*, liberation from rebirth on the physical plane. Our soul then continues evolving in the Antarloka and Śivaloka, and finally merges with Śiva like water returning to the sea. Aum Namah Śivāya

### BHĀSHYA

*Moksha* comes when earthly *karma* has been resolved, *dharma* well performed and God fully realized. Each soul must have performed well through many lives the *varna dharmas*, or four castes, and lived through life's varied experiences, in order to not be pulled back to physical birth by a deed left undone. All souls are destined to achieve *moksha*, but not necessarily in this life. Hindus know this and do not delude themselves that this life is the last. While seeking and attaining profound realizations, they know there is much to be done in fulfilling life's other goals, *purushārthas*—*dharma*, righteousness, *artha*, wealth, and *kāma*, pleasure. Old souls renounce worldly ambitions and take up *sannyāsa* in quest of Parāśiva, even at a young age. Toward life's end, all Hindus strive for Self Realization, the gateway to liberation. After *moksha*, subtle *karmas* are made in inner realms and swiftly resolved, like writing on water. At the end of each soul's evolution comes *viśvagrāsa*, total absorption in Śiva. The *Vedas* say, "If here one is able to realize Him before the death of the body, he will be liberated from the bondage of the world." Aum Namah Śivāya.

## Scriptures Speak on the Soul

The *ātman* pervades all like butter hidden in milk.  
He is the source of Self-knowledge and ascetic fervor This is the  
Brahman teaching, the highest goal! This is the Brahman teaching,  
the highest goal!

*Yajur Veda*

The inspired Self is not born nor does He die, He  
springs from nothing and becomes nothing Unborn, permanent,  
unchanging, primordial, He is not destroyed when the body  
is destroyed

*Yajur Veda*

Now, the teaching concerning the *ātman* the *ātman* is below, it is  
above, it is behind, it is before, it is in the South, it is in the North  
The *ātman* indeed is all that is He who sees, reflects and knows  
this—he has joy in the *ātman*

*Sāma Veda*

Verily, he is pure, steadfast and unswerving,  
stainless, unagitated, desireless, fixed like a spectator and  
self-abiding As an enjoyer of righteousness, he covers himself with  
a veil made of qualities, [yet] he remains fixed—yea, he  
remains fixed!

*Yajur Veda*

He who with the truth of the *ātman*, unified, perceives the  
truth of Brahman as with a lamp, who knows God, the unborn,  
the stable, free from all forms of being, is released  
from all fetters

*Yajur Veda*

A part of Infinite Consciousness becomes our own finite  
consciousness, with powers of discrimination and definition and  
with false conceptions He is, in truth, Prajāpati and Viśva, the  
Source of Creation and the Universal in us all This Spirit is  
consciousness and gives consciousness to the body He is the driver  
of the chariot

*Yajur Veda*

He who dwells in the light, yet is other than the light, whom the light does not know, whose body is the light, who controls the light from within—He is the *ātman* within you *Yajur Veda*

Pure consciousness, taking form as knowledge and action, is present in the soul everywhere and always, for the soul is universal in its unfettered state *Mrigendra Āgama*

The three impurities are *ānava*, *māyā* and the one caused by actions *Suprabhedā Āgama*

When the state is attained where one becomes Śiva, the *malas*—the bonds diverse, mental states and experiences that arose for the individualized soul—will all fade like the beams of the moon in the presence of the rising sun *Tirumantiram*

When *jīva* attains the state of neutrality to deeds good and evil, then does divine grace in *guru* form descend, remove attributes all and implant *jñāna* that is unto a heavenly cool shade The *jīva* is without egoity, and the impurities three are finished He is Śiva who all this does *Tirumantiram*

In the primal play of the Lord were *jīvas* created Enveloped in mighty *malas* were they Discarding them, they realized themselves and besought the feet of their hoary Lord Thus they became Śiva, with birth no more to be *Tirumantiram*

A goldsmith fashions several ornaments out of gold So God, the great goldsmith, makes many ornaments—different souls—out of the one Universal Spirit *Natchintanai*

The *ātman* is eternal This is the conclusion at which great souls have arrived from their experience *Natchintanai*





Samsāra Maṇḍala

संसारमण्डल



## Karma and Rebirth

*Ganeśa* is the Lord of Obstacles and Ruler of Dharma. Seated upon His throne, He guides our *karmas* through creating and removing obstacles from our path. We seek His permission and blessings in every undertaking. Aum



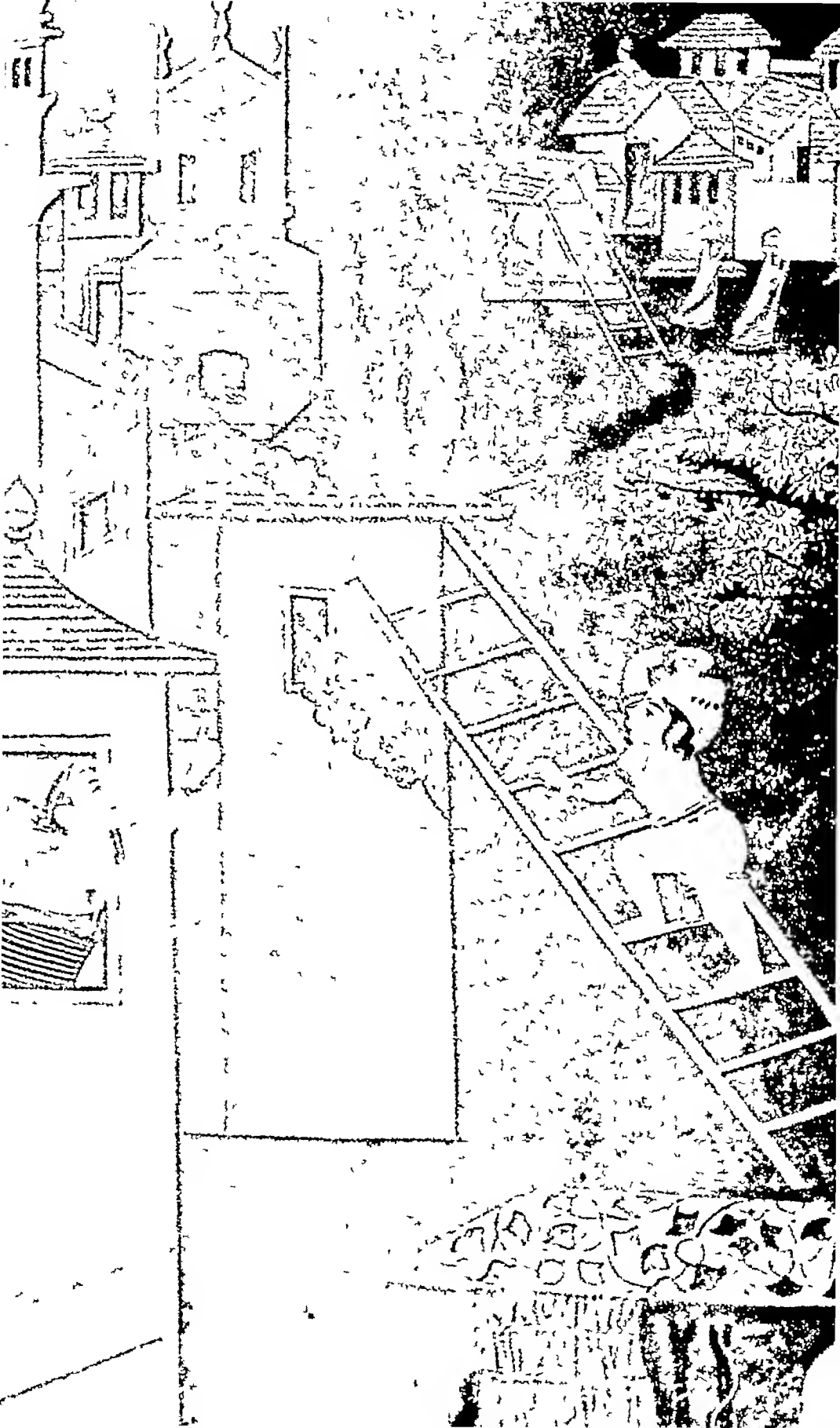
## How Do Hindus Understand Karma?

### ŚLOKA 31

*Karma* literally means “deed or act” and more broadly names the universal principle of cause and effect, action and reaction which governs all life. *Karma* is a natural law of the mind, just as gravity is a law of matter. Aum

### BHĀSHYA

*Karma* is not fate, for man acts with free will creating his own destiny. The *Vedas* tell us, if we sow goodness, we will reap goodness, if we sow evil, we will reap evil. *Karma* refers to the totality of our actions and their concomitant reactions in this and previous lives, all of which determines our future. It is the interplay between our experience and how we respond to it that makes *karma* devastating or helpfully invigorating. The conquest of *karma* lies in intelligent action and dispassionate reaction. Not all *karmas* rebound immediately. Some accumulate and return unexpectedly in this or other births. The several kinds of *karma* are personal, family, community, national, global and universal. Ancient *rishis* perceived personal *karma*’s three-fold edict. The first is *sañchita*, the sum total of past *karmas* yet to be resolved. The second is *prārabdha*, that portion of *sañchita* to be experienced in this life. *kriyamāna*, the third type, is *karma* we are currently creating. The *Vedas* propound, “Here they say that a person consists of desires. And as is his desire, so is his will. As is his will, so is his deed. Whatever deed he does, that he will reap.” Aum Namah Śivāya



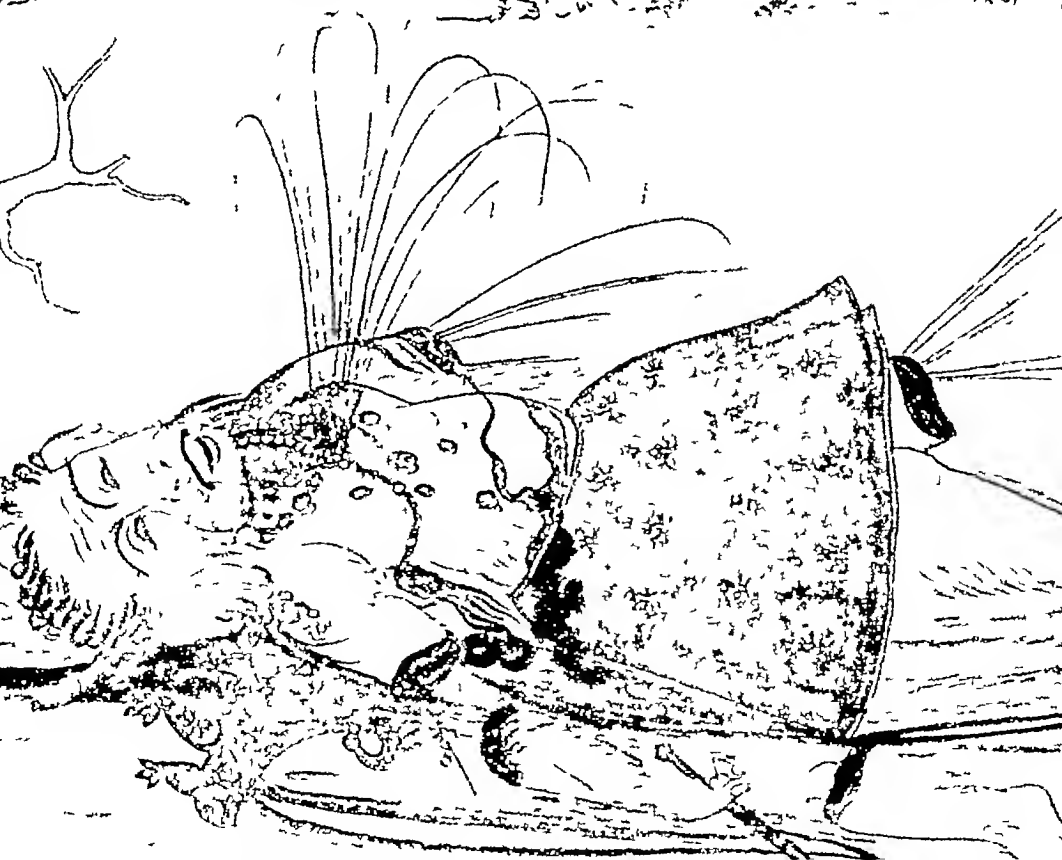
# Is There Good Karma and Bad Karma?

## ŚLOKA 32

In the highest sense, there is no good or bad *karma*. All experience offers opportunities for spiritual growth. Selfless acts yield positive, uplifting conditions. Selfish acts yield conditions of negativity and confusion. Aum

## BHĀSHYA

*Karma* itself is neither good nor bad but a neutral principle that governs energy and motion of thought, word and deed. All experience helps us grow. Good, loving actions bring to us lovingness through others. Mean, selfish acts bring back to us pain and suffering. Kindness produces sweet fruits, called *punya*. Unkindness yields spoiled fruits, called *pāpa*. As we mature, life after life, we go through much pain and joy. Actions that are in tune with *dharma* help us along the path, while *adharmic* actions impede our progress. The divine law is whatever *karma* we are experiencing in our life is just what we need at the moment, and nothing can happen but that we have the strength to meet it. Even harsh *karma*, when faced in wisdom, can be the greatest catalyst for spiritual unfoldment. Performing daily *sādhana*, keeping good company, pilgrimaging to holy places, seeing to others' needs—these evoke the higher energies, direct the mind to useful thoughts and avoid the creation of troublesome new *karmas*. The *Vedas* explain, "According as one acts, so does he become. One becomes virtuous by virtuous action, bad by bad action." Aum Namah Śivāya.



## What Is the Process of Reincarnation?

### ŚLOKA 33

Reincarnation, *punarjanma*, is the natural process of birth, death and rebirth. At death we drop off the physical body and continue evolving in the inner worlds in our subtle bodies, until we again enter into birth. Aum

### BHĀSHYA

Through the ages, reincarnation has been the great consoling element within Hinduism, eliminating the fear of death, explaining why one person is born a genius and another an idiot. We are not the body in which we live but the immortal soul which inhabits many bodies in its evolutionary journey through *samsāra*. After death, we continue to exist in unseen worlds, enjoying or suffering the harvest of earthly deeds until it comes time for yet another physical birth. Because certain *karman*s can be resolved only in the physical world, we must enter another physical body to continue our evolution. After soaring into the causal plane, we enter a new womb. Subsequently the old *manomaya kośa* is slowly sloughed off and a new one created. The actions set in motion in previous lives form the tendencies and conditions of the next. Reincarnation ceases when *karma* is resolved, God is realized and *moksha* attained. The *Vedas* say, "After death, the soul goes to the next world bearing in mind the subtle impressions of its deeds, and after reaping their harvest returns again to this world of action. Thus, he who has desires continues subject to rebirth." Aum Namah Śivāya





## How Should We View Death and Dying?

### ŚLOKA 34

Our soul never dies; only the physical body dies. We neither fear death nor look forward to it, but revere it as a most exalted experience. Life, death and the afterlife are all part of our path to perfect oneness with God. Aum.

### BHĀSHYA

For Hindus, death is nobly referred to as *mahāprasthāna*, “the great journey.” When the lessons of this life have been learned and *karmas* reach a point of intensity, the soul leaves the physical body, which then returns its elements to the earth. The awareness, will, memory and intelligence which we think of as ourselves continue to exist in the soul body. Death is a most natural experience, not to be feared. It is a quick transition from the physical world to the astral plane, like walking through a door, leaving one room and entering another. Knowing this, we approach death as a *sādhana*, as a spiritual opportunity, bringing a level of detachment which is difficult to achieve in the tumult of life and an urgency to strive more than ever in our search for the Divine Self. To be near a realized soul at the time he or she gives up the body yields blessings surpassing those of a thousand and eight visits to holy persons at other times. The *Vedas* explain, “As a caterpillar coming to the end of a blade of grass draws itself together in taking the next step, so does the soul in the process of transition strike down this body and dispel its ignorance” Aum Namah Śivāya



# How Does One Best Prepare for Death?

## ŚLOKA 35

Blessed with the knowledge of impending transition, we settle affairs and take refuge in *japa*, worship, scripture and *yoga*—seeking the highest realizations as we consciously, joyously release the world Aum Namah Śivāya

## BHĀSHYA

Before dying, Hindus diligently fulfill obligations, make amends and resolve differences by forgiving themselves and others, lest unresolved *karmas* bear fruit in future births That done, we turn to God through meditation, surrender and scriptural study As a conscious death is our ideal, we avoid drugs, artificial life-extension and suicide. Suicide only postpones and intensifies the *karma* one seeks escape from, requiring several lives to return to the evolutionary point that existed at the moment of suicide In cases of terminal illness, under strict community regulation, tradition does allow *prāyopaveśa*, self-willed religious death by fasting When nearing transition, if hospitalized, we return home to be among loved ones In the final hours of life, we seek the Self God within and focus on our *mantra* as kindred keep prayerful vigil At death, we leave the body through the crown *chakra*, entering the clear white light and beyond in quest of *videhamukti* The *Vedas* affirm, “When a person comes to weakness, be it through old age or disease, he frees himself from these limbs just as a mango, a fig or a berry releases itself from its stalk” Aum Namah Śivāya

# Scriptures Speak on Samsāra

Desireless, wise, immortal, self-existent, full of bliss, lacking in nothing, is the one who knows the wise, unaging, youthful *ātman*  
He fears not death!

*Atharva Veda*

He, however, who has not understanding, who is unmindful and ever impure, reaches not the goal, but goes on to reincarnation. He, however, who has understanding, who is mindful and ever pure, reaches the goal from which he is born no more

*Yajur Veda*

Go, my breath, to the immortal Breath. Then may this body end in ashes! Remember, O my mind, the deeds of the past, remember the deeds, remember the deeds!

*Yajur Veda*

O Māghavan, verily, this body is mortal. It has been appropriated by death. But it is the standing ground of that deathless, bodiless Self (*ātman*). Verily, he who is incorporate has been appropriated by pleasure and pain. Verily, there is no freedom from pleasure and pain for one while he is incorporate. Verily, while one is bodiless, pleasure and pain do not touch him.

*Sāma Veda*

Through the ripening of the fruits of his actions he does not attain any rest, like a worm caught within a whirlpool. The desire for liberation arises in human beings at the end of many births, through the ripening of their past virtuous conduct.

*Yajur Veda*

He lives as long as he lives. Then when he dies, they carry him to the fire. His fire, in truth, becomes the fire, fuel, the fuel, smoke, the smoke, flame, the flame, coals, the coals, sparks, the sparks. In this fire the Gods offer a person. From this oblation the man arises, having the color of light.

*Yajur Veda*

Thus acting from the principle of *māyā* itself down to the lowest level, *karma*, even when it manifests as good, is an obstacle still, because it is not toward liberation that it leads

*Karma* does not dissolve without its various fruits being tasted and consumed

*Mṛigendra Āgama*

A twice-born, gone to the end of the *Veda*, knowing that life is impermanent, may abandon the body there by fasting to death according to prescription After worshiping the Gods and honoring the *munis*, the *siddhā* may go to heaven, the eternal realm of *Brahmā*

*Mahābhārata*

Even as the snake sloughs off its skin, even as the bird leaves its shell, even as in its waking state the *jīva* forgets happenings of the dream state—thus does *jīva* from one body to another migrate until, with grace of Hara, it reaches where it is destined to be, and there experiences the two *karmas*, good and evil

*Tirumantiram*

I pray Thee for undying love I pray Thee for the birthless state, but were I to be born again, for the grace of never forgetting Thee Still more do I pray to be at Thy feet singing joyfully while Thou dancest

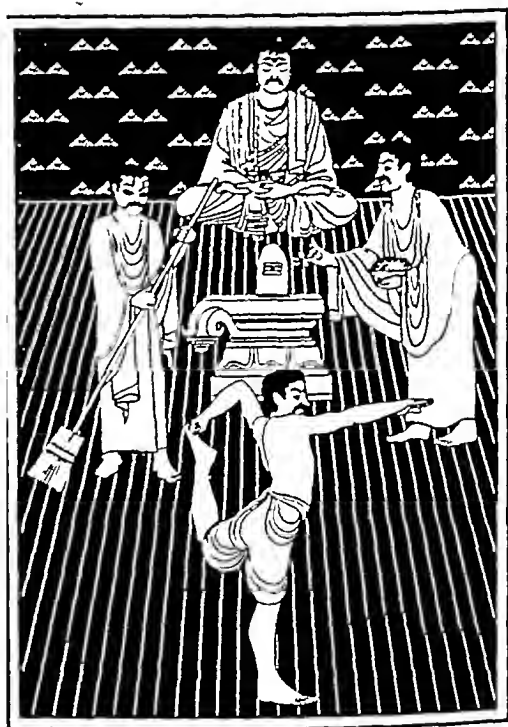
*Tirumurai*

All suffering recoils on the wrongdoer himself Therefore, those who desire not to suffer refrain from causing others pain If a man inflicts sorrow on another in the morning, sorrow will come to him unbidden in the afternoon

*Tirukural*

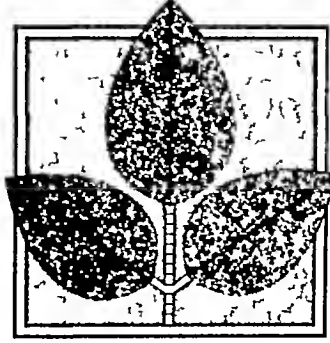
The Life of my life, whose nature 'tis to hold the fire in His hand, essence of Truth of purest gold, who neither comes nor goes, the Mighty One who doth all souls pervade—in this great world, for those who thus meditate on Him, all future births will end

*Natchintanai*



San Mārga Maṇḍala

सन्मार्गमण्डल



# The Way to Liberation

*Bilva* is the *bael* tree. Its fruit, flowers and leaves are all sacred to Śiva, liberation's summit. Planting *Aegle marmelos* trees around home or temple is sanctifying, as is worshiping a Linga with *bilva* leaves and water. Aum





## What Are the Four Stages on the Path?

### ŚLOKA 36

The path of enlightenment is divided naturally into four stages: *charyā*, virtue and selfless service, *kriyā*, worshipful *sādhana*s, *yoga*, meditation under a *guru*'s guidance, and *jñāna*, the wisdom state of the realized soul Aum

### BHĀSHYA

*Charyā*, *kriyā*, *yoga* and *jñāna* are the sequence of the soul's evolutionary process, much like the natural development of a butterfly from egg to larvae, from larvae to pupa, from pupa to caterpillar, and then the final metamorphosis from caterpillar to butterfly. These are four *pādas*, or stages, through which each human soul must pass, through many births, in order to attain its final goal. Before entering this path, the soul is immersed in the lower nature, bound in fear and lust, hurtful rage, jealousy, confusion, selfishness, consciencelessness and malice. Then it awakens into *charyā*, unselfish religious service, or *karma yoga*. Once matured in *charyā*, it enters *kriyā*, devotion or *bhakti yoga*, and finally blossoms into *kundalinī yoga*. *Jñāna* is the state of enlightened wisdom reached toward the path's end as a result of Self Realization. The four *pādas* are not alternative ways, but progressive, cumulative phases of a one path, San Mārga. The *Tirumantiram* affirms, "Being the Life of life is splendidous *jñāna* worship. Beholding the Light of life is great *yoga* worship. Giving life by invocation is external worship. Expressing adoration is *charyā*" Aum Namah Śivāya



# What Is the Nature of the Charyā Pāda?

## ŚLOKA 37

*Charyā* is the performance of altruistic religious service and living according to traditional ethical conduct and culture, by which the outer nature is purified. It is the stage of overcoming basic instinctive patterns. Aum.

## BHĀSHYA

*Charyā*, literally “conduct,” is the first stage of religiousness and the foundation for the next three stages. It is also called the *dāsa mārḡa*, meaning “path of servitude,” for here the soul relates to God as servant to master. The disciplines of *charyā* include humble service, attending the temple, performing one’s duty to community and family, honoring holy men, respecting elders, atoning for misdeeds and fulfilling the ten classical restraints called *yamas*. Within a strong society, one performs *charyā* whether he wants to or not. Young or rebellious souls often resist and resent, whereas mature souls fulfill these obligations most naturally. Right behavior and self-sacrificing service are never outgrown. The keynote of *charyā*, or *karma yoga*, is *sevā*, religious service given without the least thought of reward, which has the magical effect of softening the ego and bringing forth the soul’s innate devotion. The *Tirumantiram* explains, “The simple temple duties, lighting the lamps, picking flowers, lovingly polishing the floors, sweeping, singing the Lord’s praise, ringing the bell and fetching ceremonial water—these constitute the *dāsa mārḡa*” Aum Namah Śivāya.



## What Is the Nature of the Kriyā Pāda?

### ŚLOKA 38

*Kriyā* is joyous and regular worship, both internal and external, in the home and temple. It includes *pūjā*, *japa*, penance, fasting and scriptural learning, by which our understanding and love of God and Gods deepen. Aum.

### BHĀSHYA

Hinduism demands deep devotion through *bhakti yoga* in the *kriyā pāda*, softening the intellect and unfolding love. In *kriyā*, the second stage of religiousness, our *sādhana*, which was mostly external in *charyā*, is now also internal. *Kriyā*, literally “action or rite,” is a stirring of the soul in awareness of the Divine, overcoming the obstinacy of the instinctive-intellectual mind. We now look upon the Deity image not just as carved stone, but as the living presence of the God. We perform ritual and *pūjā* not because we have to but because we want to. We are drawn to the temple to satisfy our longing. We sing joyfully. We absorb and intuit the wisdom of the *Vedas* and *Āgamas*. We perform pilgrimage and fulfill the sacraments. We practice diligently the ten classical observances called *niyamas*. Our relationship with God in *kriyā* is as a son to his parents and thus this stage is called the *satputra mārga*. The *Tirumantiram* instructs, “*Pūjā*, reading the scriptures, singing hymns, performing *japa* and unsullied austerity, truthfulness, restraint of envy, and offering of food—these and other self-purifying acts constitute the flawless *satputra mārga*” Aum Namah Śivāya



## What Is the Nature of the Yoga Pāda?

### ŚLOKA 39

*Yoga* is internalized worship which leads to union with God. It is the regular practice of meditation, detachment and austerities under the guidance of a *satguru* through whose grace we attain the realization of Paraśiva Aum.

### BHĀSHYA

*Yoga*, “union,” is the process of uniting with God within oneself, a stage arrived at through perfecting *charyā* and *kriyā*. As God is now like a friend to us, *yoga* is known as the *sakhā mārga*. This system of inner discovery begins with *āsana*—sitting quietly in *yogic* posture—and *prānāyāma*, breath control. *Pratyāhāra*, sense withdrawal, brings awareness into *dhāranā*, concentration, then into *dhyāna*, meditation. Over the years, under ideal conditions, the *kundalinī* fire of consciousness ascends to the higher *chakras*, burning the dross of ignorance and past *karmas*. *Dhyāna* finally leads to ecstasy—first to *savikalpa samādhi*, “the contemplative experience of Sat-chidānanda, and ultimately to *nirvikalpa samādhi*, Paraśiva. Truly a living *satguru* is needed as a steady guide to traverse this path. When *yoga* is practiced by one perfected in *kriyā*, the Gods receive the *yogī* into their midst through his awakened, fiery *kundalinī*. The *Vedas* enjoin the *yogī*, “With earnest effort hold the senses in check. Controlling the breath, regulate the vital activities. As a charioteer holds back his restive horses, so does a persevering aspirant restrain his mind.” Aum Namah Śivāya





## What Is the Nature of the Jñāna Pāda?

### ŚLOKA 40

*Jñāna* is divine wisdom emanating from an enlightened being, a soul in its maturity, immersed in Śivaness, the blessed realization of God, while living out earthly *karma*. *Jñāna* is the fruition of *yoga tapas* Aum Namah Śivāya.

### BHĀSHYA

The instinctive mind in the young soul is firm and well-knit together. The intellectual mind in the adolescent soul is complicated, and he sees the physical world as his only reality. The subsuperconscious mind in the mystically inclined soul well perfected in *kriyā* longs for realization of Śiva's two perfections, Satchidānanda and Paraśiva. Through *yoga* he bursts into the superconscious mind, experiencing bliss, all-knowingness and perfect silence. It is when the *yogi's* intellect is shattered that he soars into Paraśiva and comes out a *jñānī*. Each time he enters that unspeakable *nirvikalpa samādhi*, he returns to consciousness more and more the knower. He is the liberated one, the *jīvanmukta*, the epitome of *kaivalya*—perfect freedom—far-seeing, filled with light, filled with love. One does not become a *jñānī* simply by reading and understanding philosophy. The state of *jñāna* lies in the realm of intuition, beyond the intellect. The *Vedas* say, "Having realized the Self, the *ṛishis*, perfected souls, satisfied with their knowledge, passion-free, tranquil—those wise beings, having attained the omnipresent on all sides—enter into the All itself" Aum Namah Śivāya

## Scriptures Speak on Liberation

Like the household fire, devotees seek the glory of the Lord even from afar and enshrine it in their inner chamber for enlightenment. The glory of our Lord is full of splendor, all-illuminative and worthy to be honored in every heart

*Rig Veda*

For the great-souled, the surest way to liberation is the conviction that “I am Brahman.” The two terms, what leads to bondage and what leads to liberation, are the sense of mineness and the absence of the sense of mineness

*Yajur Veda*

When the nets of dispositions (good and bad) are dissolved without any residue, when the accumulated deeds virtuous and vicious are completely destroyed to the very roots, the past and the future alike, owing to the removal of all impediments, bring about the direct and immediate perception (of Brahman) as of the *āmalaka* fruit on the palm of the hand, then (the knower of Brahman) becomes one liberated while in life

*Yajur Veda*

He remains aloof, but not aloof, in the body, but not in the body, his inmost Self becomes the All-Pervading. Having purified his heart and accomplished his perfect thinking, the *yogin* sees: I am the All, the Highest Bliss

*Yajur Veda*

When the *yogin* unites his breath with Aum or is united with the All in manifold ways, it is called *yoga*. This oneness of breath, mind and senses, the renunciation of all existence—this is termed *yoga*

*Yajur Veda*

When cease the five (sense) knowledges, together with the mind, and the intellect stirs not—that, they say, is the highest course

*Yajur Veda*

It should be known that effort for *yogic* realization by *yogis* must proceed in eight steps *yama*, *niyama*, *āsana*, *prāṇāyāma*, *pratyāhāra*, *dhāraṇā*, *dhyāna* and *saṁādhi*      *Suprabhedā Āgama*

He alone is learned, he alone is fortunate and successful, whose mind is no longer unstable as air, but is held firm That is the way to liberation, that is the highest virtue, that is wisdom, that is strength and that is the merit of those who seek      *Devikālottara Āgama*

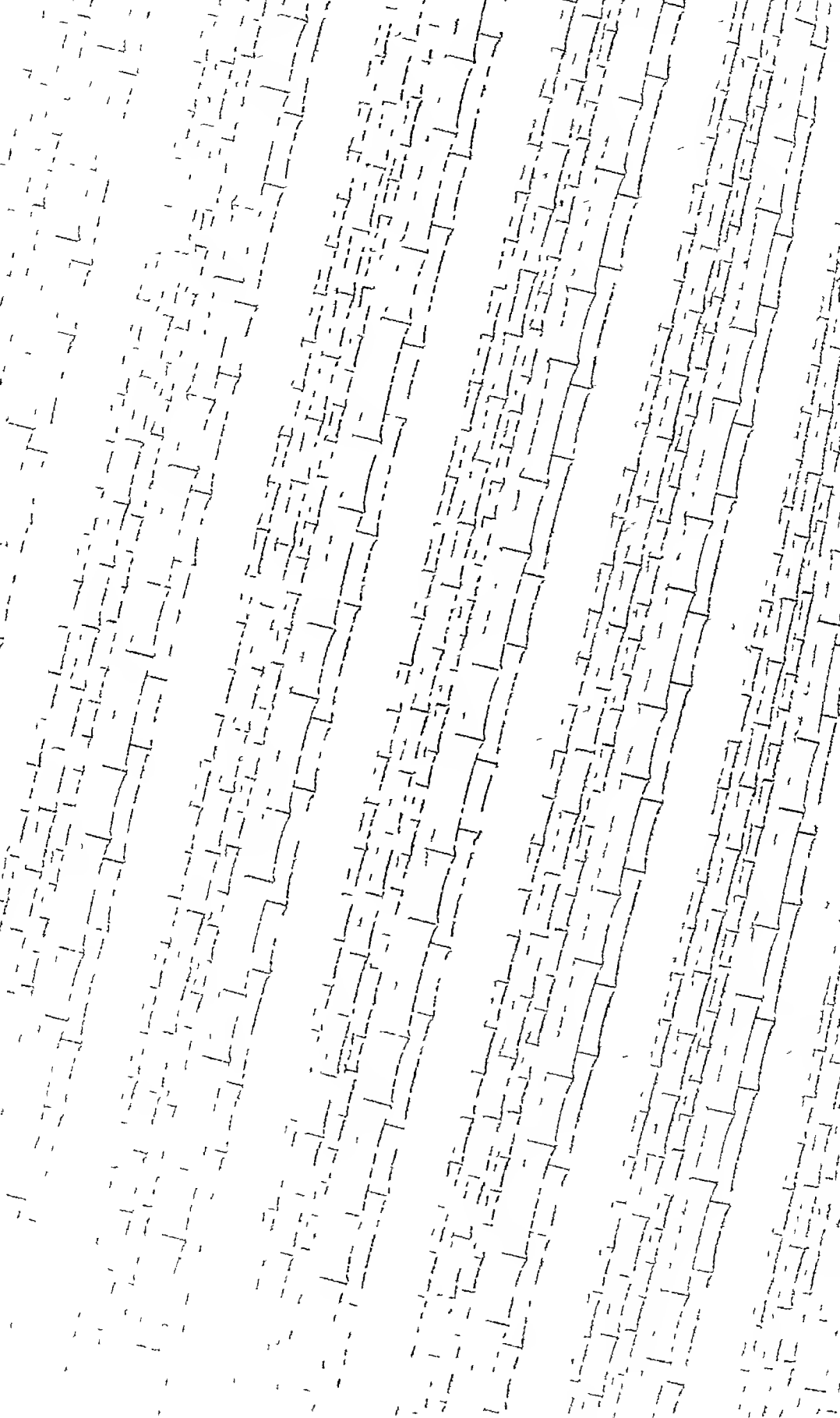
Never does a man attain *mokṣha* by his own skill, by no means other than the grace of Śiva, the dispeller of evil, is such an attainment possible      *Paushkara Āgama*

To see him, to adore him, to meditate on him, to touch him, to sing of him, to bear his holy feet on humbled head—they that render devotion to *guru* in diverse ways thus—they indeed walk the *San Mārga* that to liberation leads      *Tirumantiram*

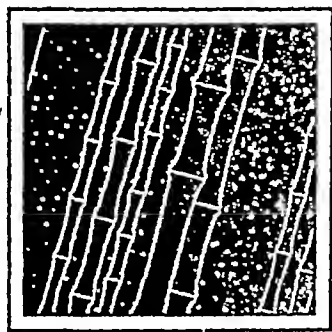
Self-control will place a man among the Gods, but the lack of it will lead him into deepest darkness      *Tirukural*

The One Entity—blissful, entire and all-pervading—alone exists, and nothing else, he who constantly realizes this knowledge is freed from death and the sorrow of the world-wheel      *Śiva Saṁhitā*

Listen while I tell you the path to liberation truth, patience, calmness and discipline of self, discrimination between the eternal and the passing, devotion to the humble servants of the Lord, rising in the early morning and bathing before daybreak, repeating in the way prescribed the flawless Letters Five, worshipping the *guru's* feet, applying holy ash, eating but when hungry, with the whole heart giving praise      *Natchintanaḥ*



Śivamaya Upanishad  
शिवमय उपनिषद्

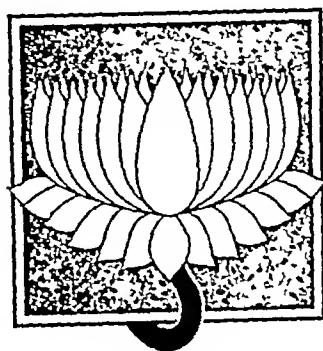


**The World**



Triloka Maṇḍala

त्रिलोकमण्डल



# The Three Worlds

*Padma* is the lotus flower, *Nelumbo nucifera*, perfection of beauty, associated with Deities and the *chakras*, especially the 1,000-petaled *sahasrāra*. Rooted in the mud, its blossom is a promise of purity and unfoldment. Aum





## Where Did This Universe Come from?

### ŚLOKA 41

Supreme God Śiva created the world and all things in it. He creates and sustains from moment to moment every atom of the seen physical and unseen spiritual universe. Everything is within Him. He is within everything. Aum

### BHĀSHYA

God Śiva created us. He created the earth and all things upon it, animate and inanimate. He created time and gravity, the vast spaces and the uncounted stars. He created night and day, joy and sorrow, love and hate, birth and death. He created the gross and the subtle, this world and the other worlds. There are three worlds of existence: the physical, subtle and causal, termed Bhūloka, Antarloka and Śivaloka. The Creator of all, Śiva Himself is uncreated. As supreme Mahādeva, Śiva wills into manifestation all souls and all form, issuing them from Himself like light from a fire or waves from an ocean. *Rishis* describe this perpetual process as the unfoldment of thirty-six *tattvas*, stages of manifestation, from the Śiva *tattva*—Parāśakti and *nāda*—to the five elements. Creation is not the making of a separate thing, but an emanation of Himself. Lord Śiva creates, constantly sustains the form of His creations and absorbs them back into Himself. The *Vedas* elucidate, “As a spider spins and withdraws its web, as herbs grow on the earth, as hair grows on the head and body of a person, so also from the Imperishable arises this universe.” Aum Namah Śivāya



## What Is the Nature of the Physical Plane?

### ŚLOKA 42

The physical plane, or Bhūloka, is the world of gross or material substance in which phenomena are perceived by the five senses. It is the most limited of worlds, the least permanent and the most subject to change. Aum

### BHĀSHYA

The material world is where we have our experiences, manufacture *karma* and fulfill the desires and duties of life in a physical body. It is in the Bhūloka that consciousness is limited, that awareness of the other two worlds is not always remembered. It is the external plane, made of gross matter, which is really just energy. The world is remarkable in its unending variety and enthralling novelty. Mystics call it the unfoldment of *prakṛti*, primal nature, and liken it to a bubble on the ocean's surface. It arises, lives and bursts to return to the source. This physical world, though necessary to our evolution, is the embodiment of impermanence, of constant change. Thus, we take care not to become overly attached to it. It is mystically subjective, not objective. It is dense but not solid. It is sentient, even sacred. It is rocks and rainbows, liquid, gas and conflagration, all held in a setting of space. The *Vedas* affirm, "The knower, the author of time, the possessor of qualities and all knowledge, it is He who envelopes the universe. Controlled by Him, this work of creation unfolds itself—that which is regarded as earth, water, fire, air and ether." Aum Namah Śivāya

नृनाथनं ध्यात्वा निर्वृत्त्या एव वा पुत्रद्वयार्थमा  
रूपं विनिर्दिशेत् ॥



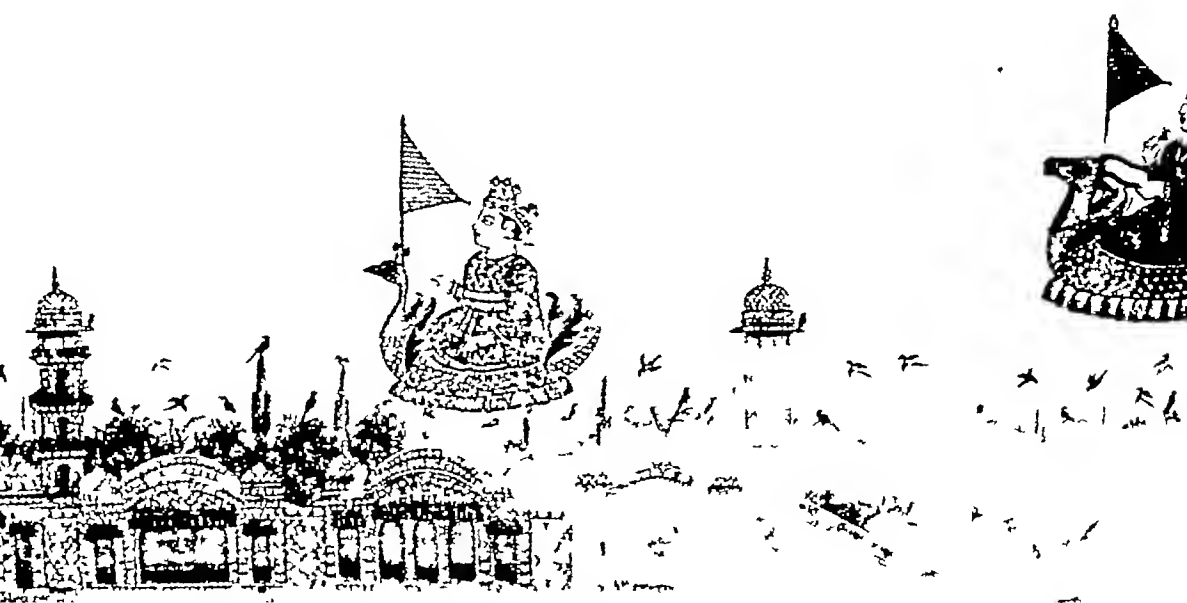
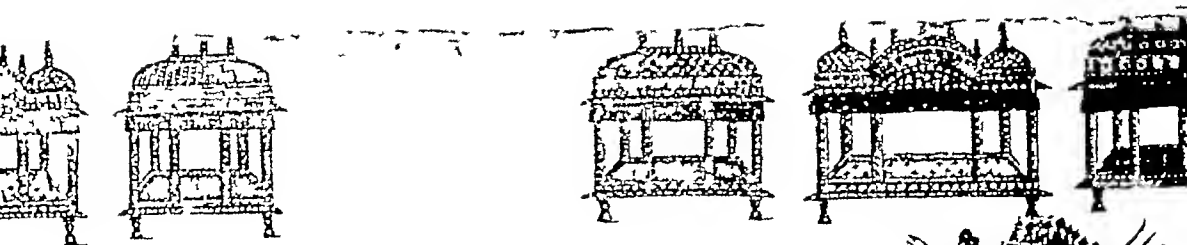
## What Is the Nature of the Subtle Plane?

### ŚLOKA 43

The subtle plane, or Antarloka, is the mental-emotional sphere that we function in through thought and feeling and reside in fully during sleep and after death. It is the astral world that exists within the physical plane. Aum

### BHĀSHYA

The astral plane is for the most part exactly duplicated in the physical plane, though it is of a more intense rate of vibration. Beings in the higher Antarloka are trained in technology, the arts and increments of culture to take up bodies in the Bhūloka, to improve and enhance conditions within it. It is in this more advanced realm that new inventions are invented, new species created, ideas unfolded, futures envisioned, environments balanced, scientists trained and artists taught finesse. We function constantly, though perhaps not consciously, in this subtle plane by our every thought and emotion. Here, during sleep and after death, we meet others who are sleeping or who have died. We attend inner-plane schools, there to advance our knowledge. The Antarloka spans the spectrum of consciousness from the hellish Naraka regions beginning at the *pātāla chakra* within the feet, to the heavenly realm of divine love in the *viśuddha chakra* within the throat. The *Vedas* recount, “Now, there are, of a truth, three worlds: the world of men, the world of the fathers, and the world of the Gods. The world of the Gods is verily the best of worlds.” Aum Namah Śivāya



## What Is the Nature of the Causal Plane?

### ŚLOKA 44

The causal plane, or Śivaloka, pulsates at the core of being, deep within the subtle plane. It is the superconscious world where the Gods and highly evolved souls live and can be accessed through *yoga* and temple worship. Aum

### BHĀSHYA

The causal plane is the world of light and blessedness, the highest of heavenly regions, extolled in the scriptures of all faiths. It is the foundation of existence, the source of visions, the point of conception, the apex of creation. The causal plane is the abode of Lord Śiva and His entourage of Mahādevas and other highly evolved souls who exist in their own self-effulgent form—radiant bodies of centillions of quantum light particles. Even for embodied souls, this refined realm is not distant, but exists within man. It is ever-present, ever-available as the clear white light that illumines the mind, accessed within the throat and cranial *chakras*—*viśuddha*, *ājñā* and *sahasrāra*—in the sublime practices of *yoga* and temple worship. It is in the causal plane that the mature soul, unshrouded of the physical body's strong instinctive pulls and astral body's harsh intellectual stranglehold, resides fully conscious in its self-effulgent form. The Śivaloka is the natural refuge of all souls. The *Vedas* intone, "Where men move at will, in the threefold sphere, in the third heaven of heavens, where are realms full of light, in that radiant world make me immortal." Aum Namah Śivāya





## Does the Universe Ever End? Is It Real?

### ŚLOKA 45

The universe ends at *mahāpralaya*, when time, form and space dissolve in God Śiva, only to be created again in the next cosmic cycle. We call it relatively real to distinguish it from the unchanging Reality. Aum Namah Śivāya.

### BHĀSHYA

This universe, and indeed all of existence, is *māyā*, Śiva's mirific energy. While God is absolutely real, His emanated world is relatively real. Being relatively real does not mean the universe is illusory or nonexistent, but that it is impermanent and subject to change. It is an error to say that the universe is mere illusion, for it is entirely real when experienced in ordinary consciousness, and its existence is required to lead us to God. The universe is born, evolves and dissolves in cycles much as the seasons come and go through the year. These cycles are inconceivably immense, ending in *mahāpralaya* when the universe undergoes dissolution. All three worlds, including time and space, dissolve in God Śiva. This is His ultimate grace—the evolution of all souls is perfect and complete as they lose individuality and return to Him. Then God Śiva exists alone in His three perfections until He again issues forth creation. The *Vedas* state, "Truly, God is One, there can be no second. He alone governs these worlds with His powers. He stands facing beings. He, the herdsman, after bringing forth all worlds, re-absorbs them at the end of time." Aum Namah Śivāya.

## Scriptures Speak on Three Worlds

As threads come out of the spider, as little sparks come out of the fire, so all the senses, all the worlds, all the Gods, yea, all beings, issue forth from the Self

*Yajur Veda*

In heaven there is no fear at all Thou, O Death, art not there. Nor in that place does the thought of growing old make one tremble There, free from hunger and from thirst, and far from the reach of sorrow, all rejoice and are glad

*Yajur Veda*

This universe is a tree eternally existing, its root aloft, its branches spread below The pure root of the tree is Brahman, the immortal, in whom the three worlds have their being, whom none can transcend, who is verily the Self

*Yajur Veda*

The spirit of man has two dwellings this world and the world beyond There is also a third dwelling place the land of sleep and dreams Resting in this borderland, the spirit of man can behold his dwelling in this world and in the other world afar, and wandering in this borderland, he beholds behind him the sorrows of this world, and in front of him he sees the joys of the beyond

*Yajur Veda*

May God—who, in the mystery of His vision and power, transforms His white radiance into His many-colored creation, from whom all things come and into whom they all return—grant us the grace of pure vision

*Yajur Veda*

When a man knows God, he is free his sorrows have an end, and birth and death are no more When in inner union he is beyond the world of the body, then the third world, the world of the Spirit, is found, where the power of the All is, and man has all—for he is one with the One

*Yajur Veda*

Without beginning art thou, beyond time, beyond space, thou art  
He from whom sprang the three worlds *Yajur Veda*

These worlds, tiered one above the other from the  
lowest to the highest, make up the universe of transmigration  
Knowers of Reality describe it as the place of effective  
experience *Mrigendra Āgama*

All these visibles and invisibles, movables and immovables, are  
pervaded by Me All the worlds existing in the *tattvas* from Śakti to  
*prithivī* [earth] exist in me Whatever is heard or seen, internally or  
externally, is pervaded by Me *Sarvajñānottara Āgama*

The gross body with presence prominent, the subtle body  
that invisible takes shape and the causal body that by  
inference is—all these bodies disappear when merging in the  
Lord's feet *Tirumantiram*

The universe, animate and inanimate, is His body  
The universe, animate and inanimate, is His play The universe,  
animate and inanimate, is He The whole universe, animate and  
inanimate, is a wonder *Natchintanai*

O' Transcendent One extending through both earth  
and heaven! Ever bright with glory! The King of Śivaloka! The  
Lord Śiva presiding at *Tiruperunturai*! I have no sustenance other  
than You *Tirumurai*

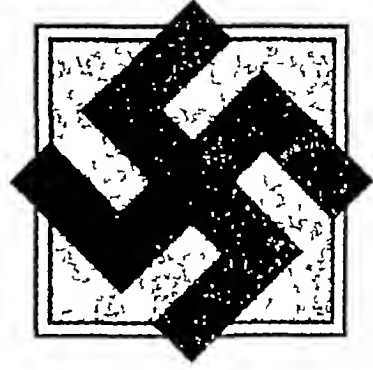
The Supreme dwells within the lotus of the heart  
Those who reach His splendid feet dwell endearingly within  
unearthly realms *Tirukural*

There is no baser folly than the infatuation that looks upon the  
transient as if it were everlasting *Tirukural*



Sarvabhadra Maṇḍala

सर्वभद्रमण्डल



The Goodness of A

*Swastika* is the symbol of auspiciousness and good fortune—literally, “It is well.” The right-angled arms of the ancient sun-sign denote the indirect way that Dharma is apprehended by intuition and not by intellect.



## Are Souls and World Essentially Good?

### ŚLOKA 46

The intrinsic and real nature of all beings is their soul, which is goodness. The world, too, is God's flawless creation. All is in perfect balance. There are changes, and they may appear evil, but there is no intrinsic evil. Aum

### BHĀSHYA

The soul radiates love, is a child of God going through its evolutionary process of growing up into the image and likeness of the Lord. Goodness and mercy, compassion and caring are the intrinsic, inherent or indwelling nature of the soul. Wisdom and pure knowledge, happiness and joy are the intrinsic nature of the soul. Can we believe the soul is anything but goodness itself, purity and all the refined qualities found within superconsciousness? When God is everywhere, how can there be a place for evil? The soul is constantly one with God in its ever-present Satchidānanda state at every point in its evolution. How, then, arises the concept of evil and suffering? *Ānava*, *karma* and *māyā*, the play toys of the soul, are the source of this seeming suffering. Like a child, we play with the toys of *ānava* in the playground of *māyā*, fall and are bruised by *karma*, then run to our loving Lord for solace and release into spiritual maturity. The *Vedas* pointedly state, "As the sun, the eye of the whole world, is not sullied by the external faults of the eyes, so the one inner soul of all things is not sullied by the sorrow in the world, being external to it" Aum Namah Śivāya





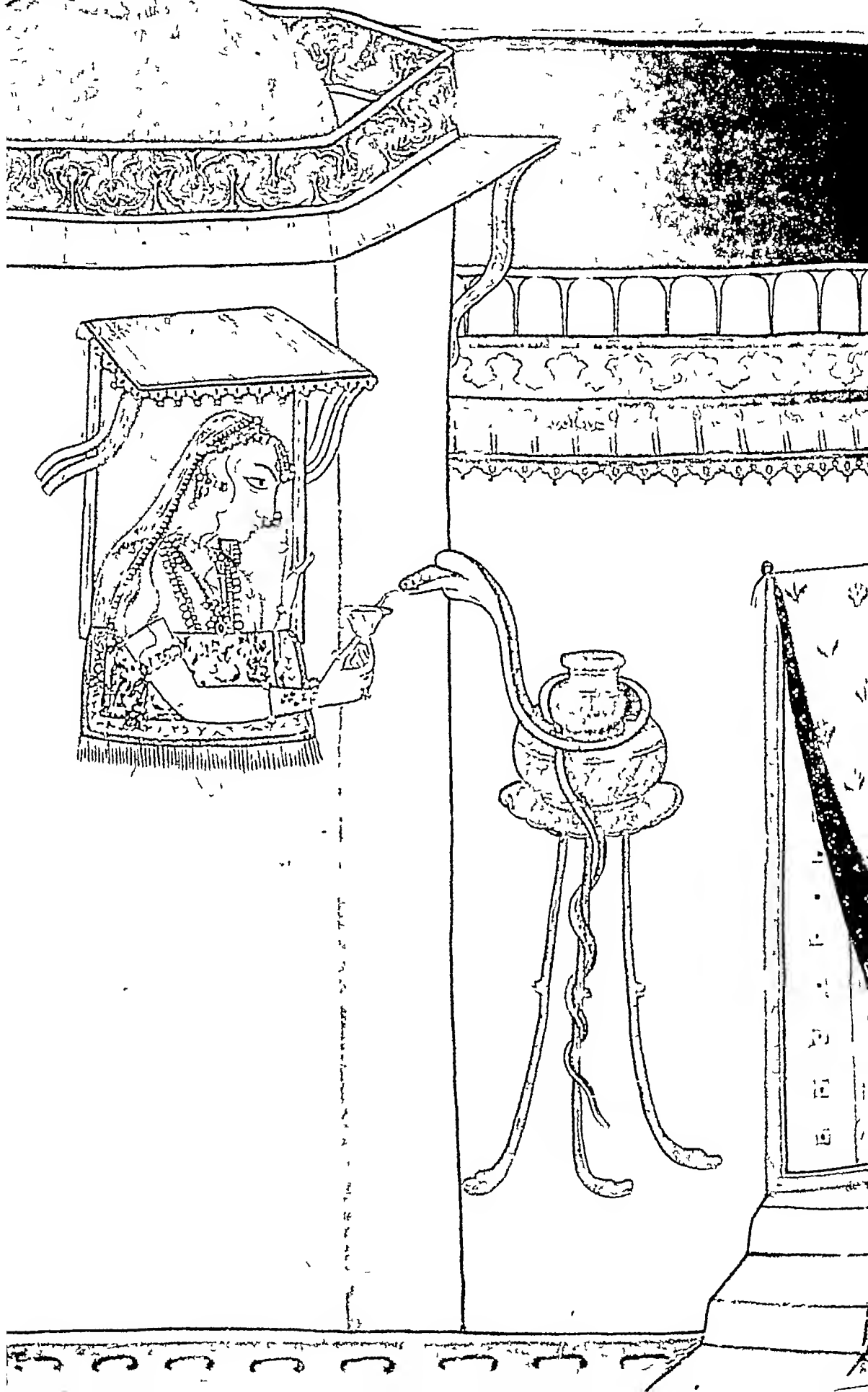
## Why Do Some Souls Act in Evil Ways?

### ŚLOKA 47

People act in evil ways who have lost touch with their soul nature and live totally in the outer, instinctive mind. What the ignorant see as evil, the enlightened see as the actions of low-minded and immature individuals. Aum

### BHĀSHYA

Evil is often looked upon as a force against God. But the Hindu knows that all forces are God's forces, even the waywardness of *adharma*. This is sometimes difficult to understand when we see the pains and problems caused by men against men. Looking deeper, we see that what is called evil has its own mysterious purpose in life. Yes, bad things do happen. Still, the wise never blame God, for they know these to be the return of man's self-created *karmas*, difficult but necessary experiences for his spiritual evolution. Whenever we are injured or hurt, we understand that our suffering is but the fulfillment of a *karma* we once initiated, for which our injurer is but the instrument who, when his *karma* cycles around, will be the injured. Those who perform seemingly evil deeds are not yet in touch with the ever-present God consciousness of their immortal soul. The *Vedas* rightly admonish, "Borne along and defiled by the stream of qualities, unsteady, wavering, bewildered, full of desire, distracted, one goes on into the state of self-conceit. In thinking, 'This is I' and 'That is mine' one binds himself with himself, as does a bird with a snare." Aum Namah Śivāya



## What Is the Source of Good and Evil?

### ŚLOKA 48

Instead of seeing good and evil in the world, we understand the nature of the embodied soul in three interrelated parts: instinctive or physical-emotional, intellectual or mental, and superconscious or spiritual Aum

### BHĀSHYA

Evil has no source, unless the source of evil's seeming be ignorance itself. Still, it is good to fear unrighteousness. The ignorant complain, justify, fear and criticize "sinful deeds," setting themselves apart as lofty puritans. When the outer, or lower, instinctive nature dominates, one is prone to anger, fear, greed, jealousy, hatred and backbiting. When the intellect is prominent, arrogance and analytical thinking preside. When the superconscious soul comes forth the refined qualities are born—compassion, insight, modesty and the others. The animal instincts of the young soul are strong. The intellect, yet to be developed, is nonexistent to control these strong instinctive impulses. When the intellect is developed, the instinctive nature subsides. When the soul unfolds and overshadows the well-developed intellect, this mental harness is loosened and removed. When we encounter wickedness in others, let us be compassionate, for truly there is no intrinsic evil. The *Vedas* say, "Mind is indeed the source of bondage and also the source of liberation. To be bound to things of this world this is bondage. To be free from them this is liberation." Aum Namah Śivāya



# How Can a Benevolent God Permit Evil?

## ŚLOKA 49

Ultimately, there is no good or bad. God did not create evil as a force distinct from good. He granted to souls the loving edicts of *dharma* and experiential choices from very subtle to most crude, thus to learn and evolve. Aum.

## BHĀSHYA

From the pinnacle of consciousness, one sees the harmony of life. Similarly, from a mountaintop, we see the natural role of a raging ocean and the steep cliffs below—they are beautiful. From the bottom of the mountain, the ocean can appear ominous and the cliffs treacherous. When through meditation, we view the universe from the inside out, we see that there is not one thing out of place or wrong. This releases the human concepts of right and wrong, good and bad. Our benevolent Lord created everything in perfect balance. Good or evil, kindness or hurtfulness return to us as the result, the fruit, of our own actions of the past. The four *dharma*s are God's wisdom lighting our path. That which is known as evil arises from the instinctive-intellectual nature, which the Lord created as dimensions of experience to strengthen our soul and further its spiritual evolution. Let us be compassionate, for truly there is no intrinsic evil. The *Vedas* admonish, "Being overcome by the fruits of his action, he enters a good or an evil womb, so that his course is downward or upward, and he wanders around, overcome by the pairs of opposites." Aum Namah Śivāya



## Should One Avoid Worldly Involvement?

### ŚLOKA 50

The world is the bountiful creation of a benevolent God, who means for us to live positively in it, facing *karma* and fulfilling *dharma*. We must not despise or fear the world. Life is meant to be lived joyously. Aum Namah Śivāya

### BHĀSHYA

The world is the place where our destiny is shaped, our desires fulfilled and our soul matured. In the world, we grow from ignorance into wisdom, from darkness into light and from a consciousness of death to immortality. The whole world is an *āśrama* in which all are doing *sādhana*. We must love the world, which is God's creation. Those who despise, hate and fear the world do not understand the intrinsic goodness of all. The world is a glorious place, not to be feared. It is a gracious gift from Śiva Himself, a playground for His children in which to interrelate young souls with the old—the young experiencing their *karma* while the old hold firmly to their *dharma*. The young grow, the old know. Not fearing the world does not give us permission to become immersed in worldliness. To the contrary, it means remaining affectionately detached, like a drop of water on a lotus leaf, being in the world but not of it, walking in the rain without getting wet. The *Vedas* warn, "Behold the universe in the glory of God and all that lives and moves on earth. Leaving the transient, find joy in the Eternal. Set not your heart on another's possession." Aum Namah Śivāya



## Scriptures Speak on Goodness

As one not knowing that a golden treasure lies buried  
beneath his feet may walk over it again and again yet never  
find it—so all beings live every moment in the city of Brahman  
yet never find Him, because of the veil of illusion by which  
He is concealed *Sāma Veda*

He who knows the fine-drawn thread of which the creatures that  
we see are spun, who knows the thread of that same thread—he  
also knows Brahman, the Ultimate *Atharva Veda*

Sin of the mind, depart far away! Why do you utter improper  
suggestions? Depart from this place! I do not want you! Go to the  
trees and the forests! My mind will remain here along with our  
homes and our cattle *Atharva Veda*

O Lord, lead us along the right path to prosperity O God, You  
know all our deeds Take from us our deceitful sin To you, then,  
we shall offer our prayers *Yajur Veda*

As water descending on mountain crags wastes its energies  
among the gullies, so he who views things as separate wastes his  
energies in their pursuit. But as pure water poured into pure  
becomes the self-same, wholly pure—so, too, becomes the  
self of the silent sage, of the one, O Gautama, who has  
understanding *Yajur Veda*

When he knows the *ātman*—the Self, the inner life,  
who enjoys like a bee the sweetness of the flowers of the senses, the  
Lord of what was and of what will be—then he goes beyond fear  
This, in truth, is That *Yajur Veda*

He who is pure of mind, intellect and ego, the senses  
and their perceptions is pure, in fact, and finds everything pure  
as well

*Sarvajñānottara Āgama*

Turn away from confusion, ignorance, delusion, dream, sleep or  
wakefulness, for the Supreme is different from the gross body, from  
the subtle *prāṇa*, from thought or intellect or ego Meditate on  
consciousness and become one with it

*Devikālottara Āgama*

How is it they received God Śiva's grace, you ask?  
In the battle of life, their bewildered thoughts wandered They  
trained their course and, freed of darkness, sought the Lord and  
adored His precious, holy feet

*Tirumantiram*

Joy and sorrow—both are *māyā* The *ātman*, never from love  
divided, is the very form of knowledge Therefore, these two will  
not touch you Can a mirage wash away the earth?

*Natchintanai*

O man! Be a little patient and see! You will understand  
who you are Do not grieve over that which does not merit  
grief Joy and sorrow are of the world You are a conscious being  
Nothing can affect you Arise! Be awake! Open the door of  
heaven with the key of Śivadhyaṇa and look! Everything  
will be revealed

*Natchintanai*

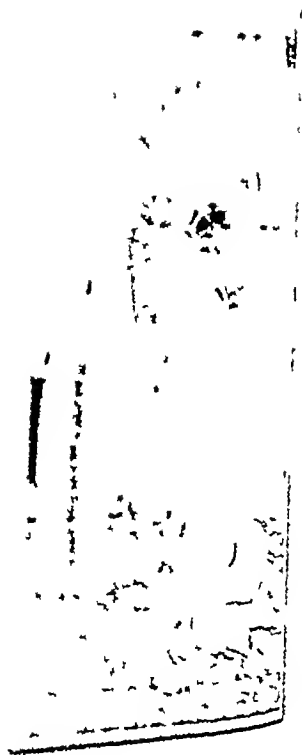
O, ye, my men! Try to get into the habit of meditating and praying  
to Śiva, the Supreme All your old sins will disappear as the filmy  
dew evaporates as soon as the sun rises

*Tirumurai*

Without virtue and penitence, devoid of love and learning,  
as a leather puppet I went around and fell He showed me the love  
and the path and the way to reach the world wherefrom there is  
no return

*Tirumurai*





Pāpa-Duḥkha Ma

पापदुःखमण्ड



Sin and Suffer

*Mahākāla*, "Great Time," presides above  
an arch Devouring instants and eons



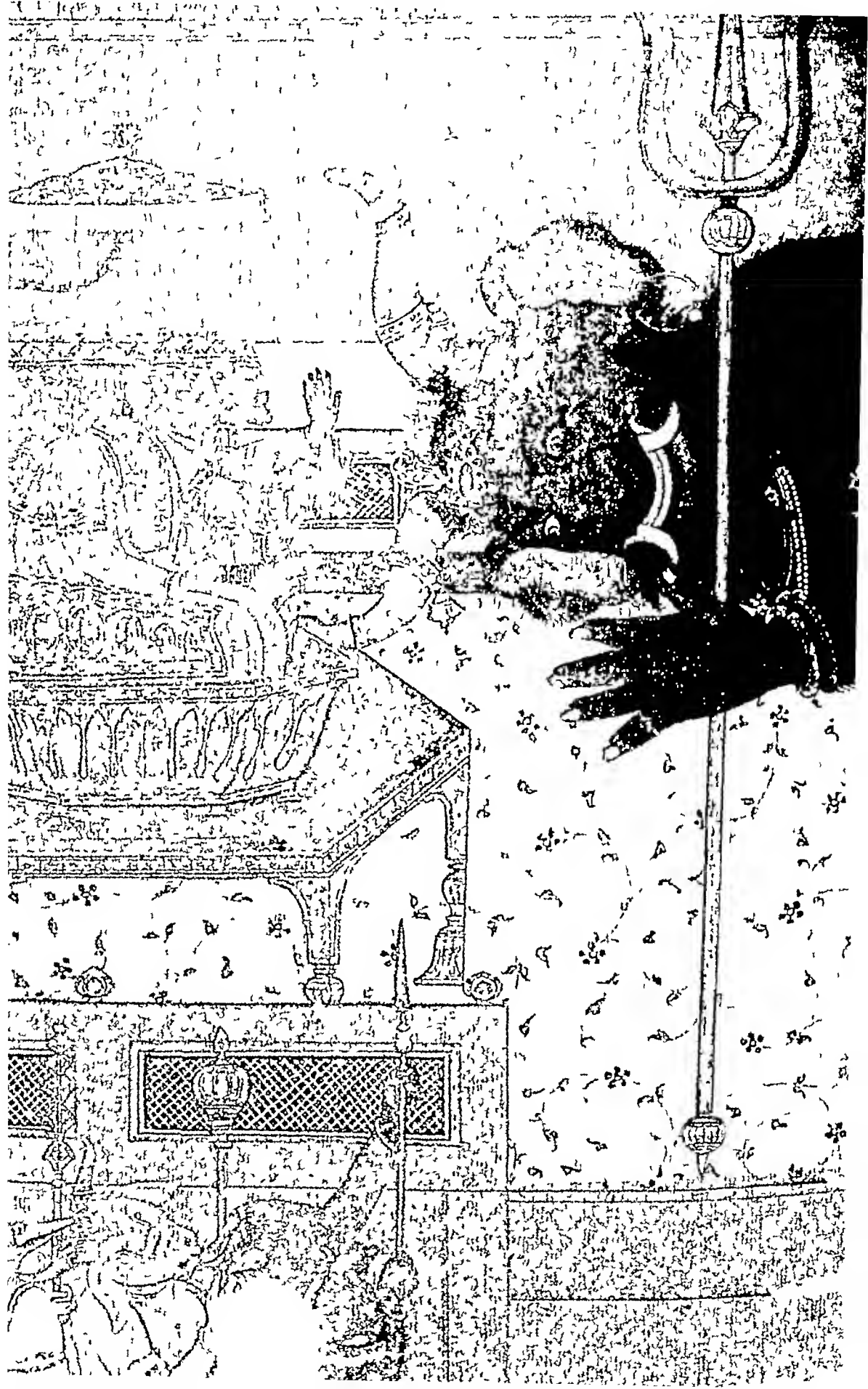
## Why Is There Suffering in the World?

### ŚLOKA 51

The nature of the world is duality It contains each thing and its opposite: joy and sorrow, goodness and evil, love and hate Through experience of these, we learn and evolve, finally seeking Truth beyond all opposites Aum

### BHĀSHYA

There is a divine purpose even in the existence of suffering in the world Suffering cannot be totally avoided It is a natural part of human life and the impetus for much spiritual growth for the soul Knowing this, the wise accept suffering from any source, be it hurricanes, earthquakes, floods, famine, wars, disease or inexplicable tragedies Just as the intense fire of the furnace purifies gold, so does suffering purify the soul to resplendence So also does suffering offer us the important realization that true happiness and freedom cannot be found in the world, for earthly joy is inextricably bound to sorrow, and worldly freedom to bondage Having learned this, devotees seek a *satguru* who teaches them to understand suffering, and brings them into the intentional hardships of *sādhana* and *tapas* leading to liberation from the cycles of experience in the realm of duality The *Āgamas* explain, "That which appears as cold or as hot, fresh or spoiled, good fortune and bad, love and hate, effort and laziness, the exalted and the depraved, the rich and the poor, the well-founded and the ill-founded, all this is God Himself, none other than Him can we know" Aum Namah Śivāya



# What Is Sin? How Can We Atone for It?

## ŚLOKA 52

Sin is the intentional transgression of divine law. There is no inherent or "original" sin. Neither is there mortal sin by which the soul is forever lost. Through *sādhana*, worship and austerities, sins can be atoned for. Aum.

## BHĀSHYA

What men term sin, the wise call ignorance. Man's true nature is not sullied by sin. Sin is related only to the lower, instinctive-intellectual nature as a transgression of *dharma*. Still, sin is real and to be avoided, for our wrongful actions return to us as sorrow through the law of *karma*. Sin is terminable, and its effects may be compensated for by penance, or *prāyaścitta*, and good deeds which settle the *karmic* debt. The young soul, less in tune with his soul nature, is inclined toward sin, the old soul seldom transgresses divine law. Sins are the crippling distortions of intellect bound in emotion. When we sin, we take the energy and distort it to our instinctive favor. When we are unjust and mean, hateful and holding resentments year after year and no one but ourselves knows of our intrigue and corruption, we suffer. As the soul evolves, it eventually feels the great burden of faults and misdeeds and wishes to atone. Penance is performed, and the soul seeks absolution from society and beseeches God's exonerating grace. The *Vedas* say, "Loose me from my sin as from a bond that binds me. May my life swell the stream of your river of Right." Aum Namah Śivāya





## Does Hell Really Exist? Is There a Satan?

### ŚLOKA 53

There is no eternal hell, nor is there a Satan. However, there are hellish states of mind and woeful births for those who think and act wrongfully—temporary tormenting conditions that lift the fiery forces within. Aum.

### BHĀSHYA

Hell, termed Naraka, is the lower astral realm of the seven *chakras* below the *mūlādhāra*. It is a place of fire and heat, anguish and dismay, of confusion, despair and depression. Here anger, jealousy, argument, mental conflict and tormenting moods plague the mind. Access to hell is brought about by our own thoughts, words, deeds and emotions—suppressed, antagonistic feelings that court demons and their aggressive forces. Hell is not eternal. Nor is there a Satan who tempts man and opposes God's power, though there are devilish beings called *asuras*, immature souls caught in the abyss of deception and hurtfulness. We do not have to die to suffer the Naraka regions, for hellish states of mind are also experienced in the physical world. If we do die in a hellish state of consciousness—burdened by unresolved hatred, remorse, resentment, fear and distorted patterns of thought—we arrive in Naraka fully equipped to join others in this temporary astral purgatory. The *Vedas* say, "Sunless and demonic, verily, are those worlds, and enveloped in blinding darkness, to which all those people who are enemies of their own souls go after death." Aum Namah Śivāya



## What Is the Consequence of Sinful Acts?

### ŚLOKA 54

When we do not think, speak and act virtuously, we create negative *karmas* and bring suffering upon ourselves and others. We suffer when we act instinctively and intellectually without superconscious guidance Aum

### BHĀSHYA

We are happy, serene and stable when we follow good conduct, when we listen to our conscience, the knowing voice of the soul. The superconscious mind, the mind of our soul, knows and inspires good conduct, out of which comes a refined, sustainable culture. Wrongdoing and vice lead us away from God, deep into the darkness of doubt, despair and self-condemnation. This brings the *asuras* around us. We are out of harmony with ourselves and our family and must seek companionship elsewhere, amongst those who are also crude, unmindful, greedy and lacking in self-control. In this bad company, burdensome new *karma* is created, as good conduct cannot be followed. This *pāpa* accumulates, blinding us to the religious life we once lived. Penance and throwing ourselves upon the mercy of God and the Gods are the only release for the unvirtuous, those who conduct themselves poorly. Fortunately, our Gods are compassionate and love their devotees. The ancient *Vedas* elucidate, "The mind is said to be twofold: the pure and also the impure, impure by union with desire—pure when from desire completely free!" Aum Namah Śivāya



## Does God Ever Punish Wrongdoers?

### ŚLOKA 55

God is perfect goodness, love and truth. He is not wrathful or vengeful. He does not condemn or punish wrongdoers. Jealousy, vengefulness and vanity are qualities of man's instinctive nature, not of God. Aum Namah Śivāya

### BHĀSHYA

There is no reason to ever fear God, whose right-hand gesture, *abhaya mudrā*, indicates "fear not," and whose left hand invites approach. God is with us always, even when we are unaware of that holy presence. He is His creation. It is an extension of Himself, and God is never apart from it nor limited by it. When we act wrongly, we create negative *karma* for ourselves and must then live through experiences of suffering to fulfill the law of *karma*. Such *karmas* may be painful, but they were generated from our own thoughts and deeds. God never punishes us, even if we do not believe in Him. It is by means of worship of and meditation on God that our self-created sufferings are softened and assuaged. God is the God of all—of the believers within all religions, and of the nonbelievers, too. God does not destroy the wicked and redeem the righteous, but grants the precious gift of liberation to all souls. The *Āgamas* state, "When the soul gradually reduces and then stops altogether its participation in darkness and inauspicious powers, the Friend of the World, God, reveals to the soul the limitless character of its knowledge and activity." Aum Namah Śivāya

## Scriptures Speak on Sin and Suffering

When, to a man who knows, all beings have become one with his own Self, when furthermore he perceives this oneness, how then can sorrow or delusion touch him?

*Yajur Veda*

I glorify Him who is of wonderful radiance like the sun, who is the giver of happiness, lovely, benevolent, and the One whom all welcome like a guest. He bestows vigor upon the worshipers, may He, the fire divine, remove our sorrow and give us heroic strength and all sustaining riches

*Rig Veda*

I go for refuge to God who is One in the silence of eternity, pure radiance of beauty and perfection, in whom we find our peace. He is the bridge supreme which leads to immortality, and the spirit of fire which burns the dross of lower life

*Yajur Veda*

When a seer sees the creator of golden hue, the Lord, the Person, the source of Brahman, then being a knower, shaking off good and evil and free from stain, he attains supreme equality with the Lord

*Atharva Veda*

Only by a tranquil mind does one destroy all action, good or bad. Once the self is pacified, one abides in the Self and attains everlasting bliss. If the mind becomes as firmly established in Brahman as it is usually attached to the sense objects, who, then, will not be released from bondage?

*Yajur Veda*

Words cannot describe the joy of the soul whose impurities are cleansed in deep contemplation—who is one with his *ātman*, his own Spirit. Only those who feel this joy know what it is

*Yajur Veda*

Even though he causes pain to his patient by applying certain remedies, the physician is not taken to be the cause of the suffering, because in the final analysis he has produced the good that was sought after

*Mrigendra Āgama*

Disputes, worldly associations and quarrels should be avoided Not even spiritual disputations should be indulged in, whether good or bad Jealousy, slander, pomp, passion, envy, love, anger, fear and misery should all disappear gradually and entirely

*Devākālottara Āgama*

And even if thou wert the greatest of sinners, with the help of the vessel of wisdom thou shalt cross the sea of evil Even as a burning fire burns all fuel into ashes, the fire of eternal wisdom burns into ashes all works

*Bhagavad Gītā*

The virtuous wife, devotee true and *jñāni* great—those who have done exceeding harm to shock these, their life and wealth will in a year disappear

*Tirumantiram*

A physician takes various roots, mixes them together into one medicine and with it cures the disease Likewise, the great All-Knowing Physician, by giving to the soul its body, faculties, the world and all its experiences, cures its disease and establishes it in the bliss of liberation

*Natchintanai*

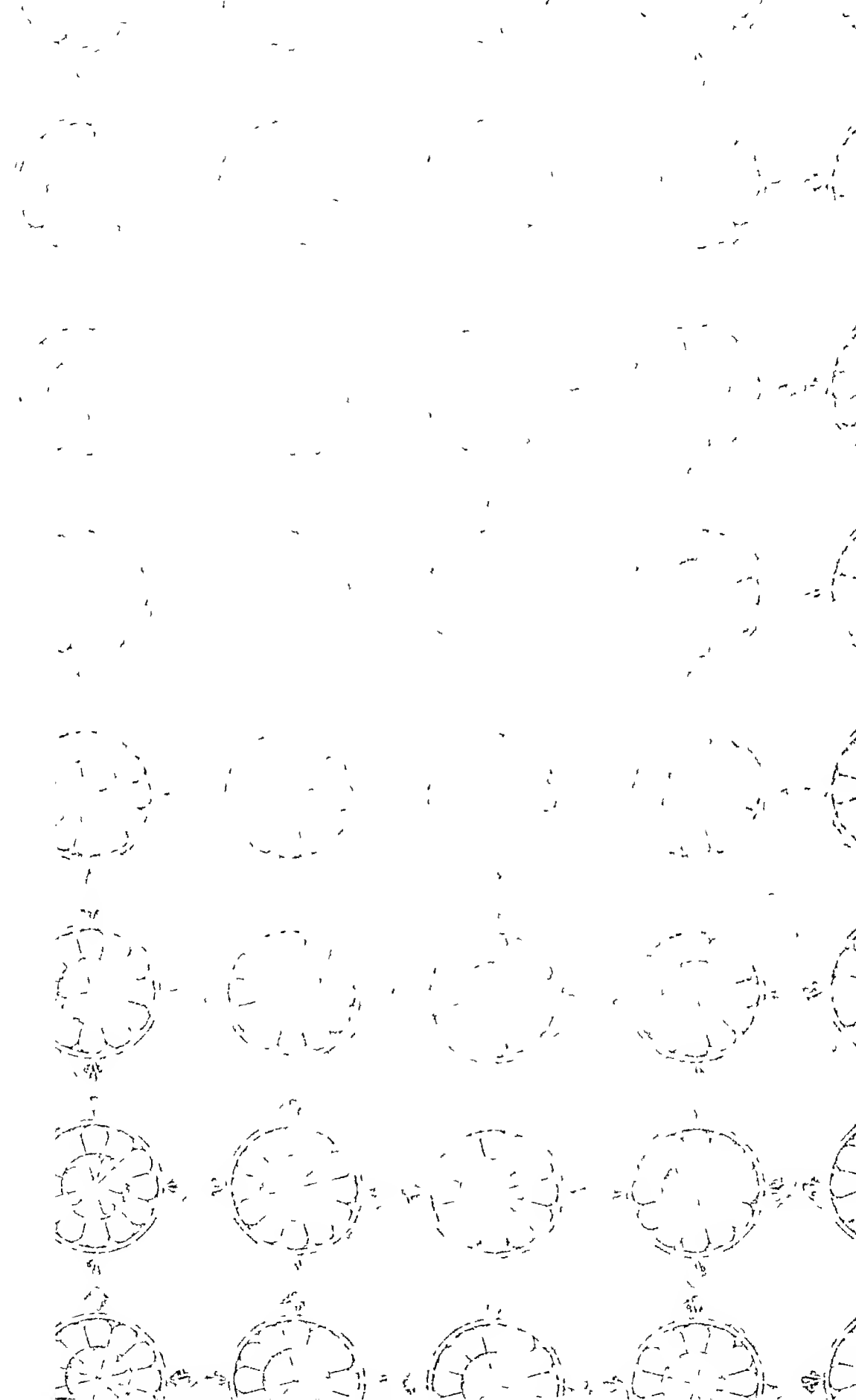
O, my Lord, the five senses have taken possession of my body and driven me away from your holy feet I am confused and troubled at heart, like the curd which is being churned. Bestow enlightenment upon me

*Tirumurai*

As the intense fire of the furnace refines gold to brilliancy, so does the burning suffering of austerity purify the soul to resplendence

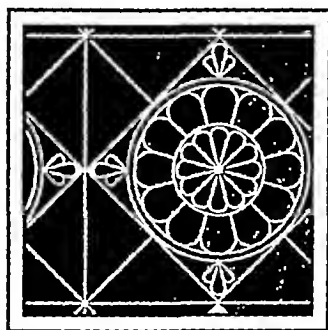
*Tirukural*



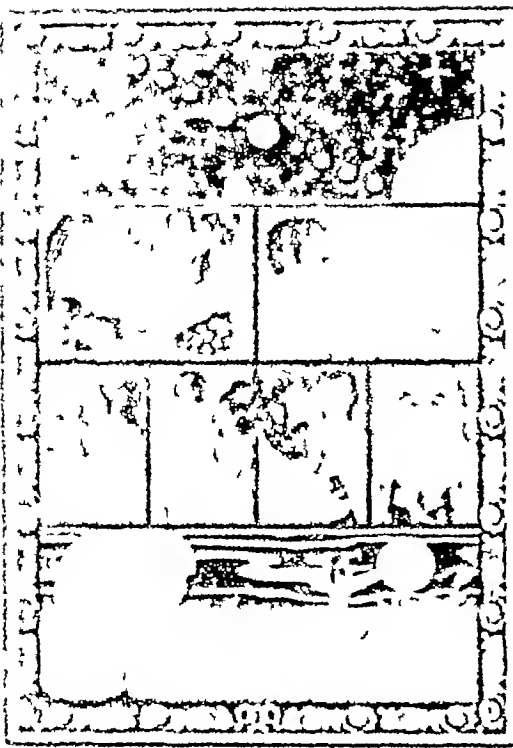


Dharma Upanishad

धर्म उपनिषद्

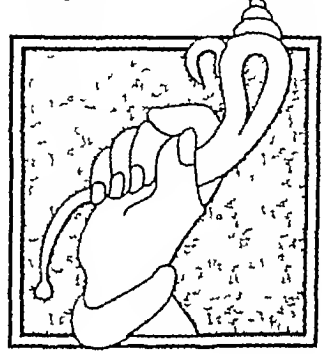


Right Living



Chaturdharma Mantra

चतुर्धर्ममण्डल



Four Dharm



## What Is Dharma? What Are Its Forms?

### ŚLOKA 56

*Dharma* is the law of being, the orderly fulfillment of an inherent nature and destiny *Dharma* is of four main divisions, which are God's law at work on four levels of our existence: universal, human, social and personal. Aum

### BHĀSHYA

When God created the universe, He endowed it with order, with the laws to govern creation *Dharma* is God's divine law prevailing on every level of existence, from the sustaining cosmic order to religious and moral laws which bind us in harmony with that order. We are maintained by *dharma*, held in our most perfect relationship within a complex universe. Every form of life, every group of men, has its *dharma*, the law of its being. When we follow *dharma*, we are in conformity with the Truth that inheres and instructs the universe, and we naturally abide in closeness to God. *Adharma* is opposition to divine law. *Dharma* prevails in the laws of nature and is expressed in our culture and heritage. It is piety and ethical practice, duty and obligation. It is the path which leads us to liberation. Universal *dharma* is known as *ṛita*. Social *dharma* is *varna dharma*. Human *dharma* is known as *āśrama dharma*. Our personal *dharma* is *sva-dharma*. Hinduism, the purest expression of these four timeless *dharma*s, is called Sanātana Dharma. The *Vedas* proclaim, "There is nothing higher than *dharma*. Verily, that which is *dharma* is Truth." Aum Namah Śivāya



## What Is Signified by Universal Dharma?

### ŚLOKA 57

Universal law, known in the *Vedas* as *rita*, is cosmic order, God's rule at work throughout the physical province. It is the infinite intelligence or consciousness in nature, the sustaining cosmic design and organizing force. Aum

### BHĀSHYA

*Rita* is the underlying divine principle and universal law regulating nature, from the voyage of stars in vast galactic orbits to the flux of infinitesimal subatomic energies. *Rita* is the Tao. It is destiny and the road to destiny. When we are in tune with universal *dharma*, and realize that man is an integral part of nature and not above it or dominating it, then we are in tune with God. All Hindus feel they are guests on the planet with responsibilities to nature, which when fulfilled balance its responsibilities to them. The physical body was gathered from nature and returns to it. Nature is exquisitely complex and orderly. The coconut always yields a coconut tree, a lotus a lotus, a rose a rose, not another species. How constant nature is, and yet how diverse, for in mass producing its creations, no two ever look exactly alike. Yes, the Hindu knows himself to be a part of nature and seeks to bring his life into harmony with the universal path, the sustaining cosmic force. The *Vedas* proclaim, "Earth is upheld by Truth. Heaven is upheld by the sun. The solar regions are supported by eternal laws, *rita*. The elixir of divine love is supreme in heaven." Aum Namah Śivāya





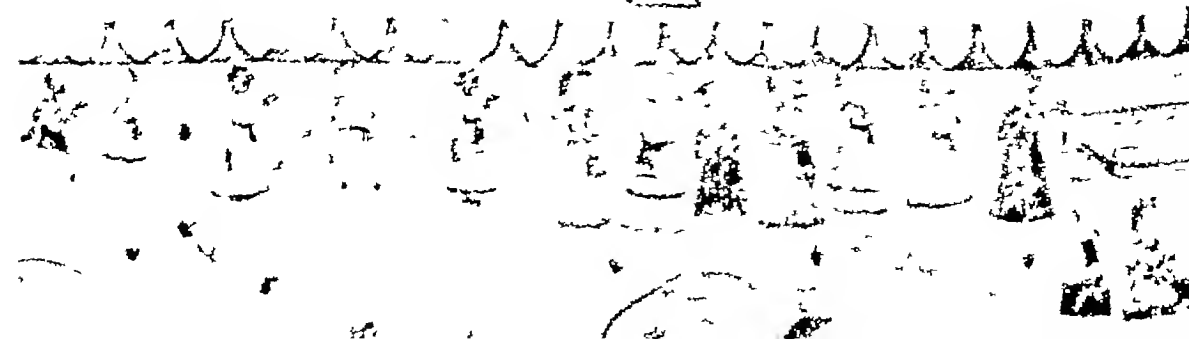
## What Is the Nature of Social Dharma?

### ŚLOKA 58

Social law, or *varna dharma*, consists of the occupation, duties and responsibilities we must fulfill as a member of our nation, community and family. An important aspect of this *dharma* is religious and moral law. Aum

### BHĀSHYA

Every human society defines a complex stratification of community interaction. Scholarly, pious souls of exceptional learning are the wise *brāhmins*. Lawmakers and law-enforcers are the guardian *kshatriyas*. Bankers and businessmen are merchant *vaiśyas*. Laborers, workers and artisans are *śūdras*. In addition to these four classes, or *varnas*, are hundreds of castes, or *jātis*. In Hindu societies, class and caste, which dictates one's occupation and community, is largely hereditary. However, these birth-imposed categories can be transcended by the ambitious who enter new careers through education, skill and persistence. Social *dharma* is fulfilled in adherence to the laws of our nation, to our community responsibilities and to our obligations among family and friends. A comprehensive system of duties, morals and religious observances make up God's law at work in our daily life. Rightly followed, *varna dharma* enhances individual and family progress and ensures the continuity of culture. The *Vedas* say, "When a man is born, whoever he may be, there is born simultaneously a debt to the Gods, to the sages, to the ancestors and to men." Aum Namah Śivāya.



## What Is the Nature of Human Dharma?

### ŚLOKA 59

Human law, or *āśrama dharma*, is the natural expression and maturing of the body, mind and emotions through four progressive stages of earthly life: student, householder, elder advisor and religious solitaire Aum

### BHĀSHYA

The four *āśramas* are “stages of striving,” in pursuit of the *purushārthas*: righteousness, wealth, pleasure and liberation. Our first 24 years of life are a time of intense learning. Around age 12, we enter formally the *brahmacharya āśrama* and undertake the study and skills that will serve us in later life. From 24 to 48, in the *grihastha āśrama*, we work together as husband and wife to raise the family, increasing wealth and knowledge through our profession, serving the community and sustaining the members of the other three *āśramas*. In the *vānaprastha āśrama*, from 48 to 72, slowly retiring from public life, we share our experience by advising and guiding younger generations. After age 72, as the physical forces wane, we turn fully to scripture, worship and *yoga*. This is the *sannyāsa āśrama*, which differs from the formal life of ochre-robed monks. Thus, our human *dharma* is a natural awakening, expression, maturing and withdrawal from worldly involvement. The *Vedas* say, “Pursuit of the duties of the stage of life to which each one belongs—that, verily, is the rule! Others are like branches of a stem. With this, one tends upwards; otherwise, downwards.” Aum Namah Śivāya.



## What Is the Nature of Personal Dharma?

### ŚLOKA 60

Personal law, or *svadharma*, is our own perfect individual pattern in life. It is the sum of our accumulated seed *karmas* as they relate to the collective effect on us of *rita*, *āśrama* and *varna dharma*. Aum Namah Śivāya

### BHĀSHYA

Each human being has an individual, personal *dharma*. This *dharma* is determined by two things: the *karmas*, both good and bad, from past lives, and the three *dharma*s of this life—universal, human and social. *Svadharma*, “one’s own law,” is molded by our background and experiences, tendencies and desires—indicated by astrology—all of which determine our personality, profession and associations. The key to discovering and understanding personal *dharma* is the worship of Lord Ganeśa, the God of memory, time and wisdom, who knows our past lives and can clarify our most perfect pattern, our right path in life. When we follow this unique pattern—guided by *guru*, wise elders and the knowing voice of our soul—we are content and at peace with ourselves and the world. *Dharma* is to the individual what its normal development is to a seed—the orderly fulfillment of an inherent nature and destiny. A Vedic prayer implores, “That splendor that resides in an elephant, in a king, among men, or within the waters, with which the Gods in the beginning came to Godhood, with that same splendor make me splendid, O Lord” Aum Namah Śivāya

## Scriptures Speak on Four Dharmas

We all have various thoughts and plans, and diverse are the callings of men The carpenter seeks out that which is cracked, the physician, the ailing, the priest, the *soma* press *Rīg Veda*

The daughter of heaven has revealed Herself in the eastern region, all clothed in light Faithfully She follows the path of *ṛita dharma*, well understanding, She measures out the regions *Rīg Veda*

The hands are alike but in their work they differ So also, two cows, offspring of a single mother, may yet give differing yields of milk Even twins are not the same in strength, or kinsmen in bounty *Rīg Veda*

A man should think on wealth and strive to win it by adoration on the path of Order, counsel himself with his own mental insight, and grasp still nobler vigor with his spirit *Rīg Veda*

Who, weary of Brahman studentship, having fully learnt the *Vedas*, is discharged by the teacher he had ever obeyed, such a one is called the *āśramin* Choosing a wife of equally high birth, he should deposit the sacred fires, and bring to those Deities the Brahman sacrifice day and night until, dividing among the children his property, abstaining from conjugal pleasures, he gives himself to the forest life, wandering in a pure region Living on water and on air, and on such fruit as proper, fire within body, he abides on earth without obligations, without tears *Atharva Veda*

A hundred uninitiated are equal to one *brahmachārī* A hundred *brahmachārīs* are equal to one *grihastha* A hundred *grihasthas* are equal to one *vānaprastha* A hundred *vānaprasthas* are equal to one *sannyāsīn* *Atharva Veda*

In how many parts was He transformed when they cut the Purusha in pieces? What did His mouth become? What His arms, what His thighs, what His feet? His mouth then became the *brāhmaṇa*, from the arms the *rājanya* was made, the *vaiśya* from the thighs, from the feet the *śūdra* came forth

*Rīg Veda*

The works of *brāhmins*, *kshatriyas*, *vaiśyas* and *śūdras* are different, in harmony with the three powers of their born nature. The works of a *brāhmin* are peace, self-harmony, austerity and purity, loving forgiveness and righteousness, vision, wisdom and faith. These are the works of a *kshatriya*—a heroic mind, inner fire, constancy, resourcefulness, courage in battle, generosity and noble leadership. Trade, agriculture and the rearing of cattle is the work of a *vaiśya*. And the work of the *śūdra* is service. They all attain perfection when they find joy in their work.

*Bhagavad Gītā*

A man attains perfection when his work is worship of God, from whom all things come and who is in all. Greater is thine own work, even if this be humble, than the work of another, even if this be great. When a man does the work God gives him, no sin can touch this man.

*Bhagavad Gītā*

A *sattvic* he is, his thoughts centered on Paratattva, his vision clear through conflicting faiths, abhorrent of recurring cycles of births, straight in *dharma's* path he easily walks. He, sure, is disciple good and true.

*Tirumantiram*

He who understands his duty to society truly lives. All others shall be counted among the dead.

*Tirukural*

By the laws of *dharma* that govern body and mind, you must fear sin and act righteously. Wise men, by thinking and behaving in this way, become worthy to gain bliss both here and hereafter.

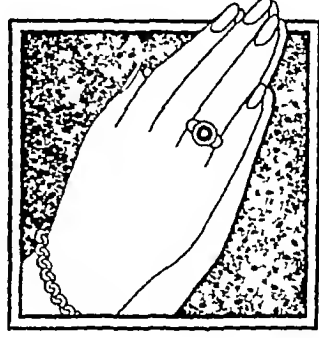
*Natchintanai*





Sadāchāra Maṇḍala

सदाचारमण्डल



Good Conduct

*Añjali*, the gesture of two hands brought together at the heart, means to “honor or celebrate” It is our daily greeting, two joined as one, the bringing together of matter and spirit, the self meeting the Self in all .



## What Is the Meaning of Good Conduct?

### ŚLOKA 61

Good conduct is right thought, right speech and right action. It is virtuous deeds in harmony with divine law, reflecting the soul's innate purity As a staff is used to climb a mountain, so must virtue be used in life Aum

### BHĀSHYA

Good conduct, *sadāchāra*, determines our behavior in day-to-day life We should be uplifting to our fellow man, not critical or injurious We should be loving and kind, not hateful or mean. We should express the soul's beautiful qualities of self-control, modesty and honesty We should be a good example to others and a joy to be around, not a person to be avoided Good conduct is the sum of spiritual living and comes through keeping good company When heart and mind are freed of baseness, when desires have been tempered and excesses avoided, *dharma* is known and followed, and good conduct naturally arises. The Hindu fosters humility and shuns arrogance, seeks to assist, never to hinder, finds good in others and forgets their faults There is no other way to be called a true devotee, but to conduct ourself properly within ourself and among our fellow men The *Vedas* say, "Let there be no neglect of Truth Let there be no neglect of *dharma* Let there be no neglect of welfare Let there be no neglect of prosperity Let there be no neglect of study and teaching Let there be no neglect of the duties to the Gods and the ancestors" Aum Namah Śivāya



## What Are Good Conduct's Four Keys?

### ŚLOKA 62

Purity, devotion, humility and charity are the four keys to good conduct. Of these, purity is the cardinal virtue. We cultivate purity by thinking, speaking and doing only that which is conceived in compassion for all. Aum.

### BHĀSHYA

Purity is the pristine and natural state of the soul. We cultivate purity by refraining from anger and retaliation, by maintaining a clean and healthy body, and by guarding our virginity until marriage. We cultivate purity by seeking good company and by living a disciplined life. Devotion is love of God, Gods and *guru*, and dedication to family and friends. We cultivate devotion through being loyal and trustworthy. We cultivate devotion through worship and selfless service. Humility is mildness, modesty, reverence and unpretentiousness. We cultivate humility by taking the experiences of life in understanding and not in reaction, and by seeing God everywhere. We cultivate humility through showing patience with circumstances and forbearance with people. Charity is selfless concern and caring for our fellow man. It is generous giving without thought of reward, always sharing and never hoarding. We cultivate charity through giving to the hungry, the sick, the homeless, the elderly and the unfortunate. The *Vedas* explain, "As to a mountain that's enflamed, deer and birds do not resort—so, with knowers of God, sins find no shelter." Aum Namah Śivāya



## From Whom Is Good Conduct Learned?

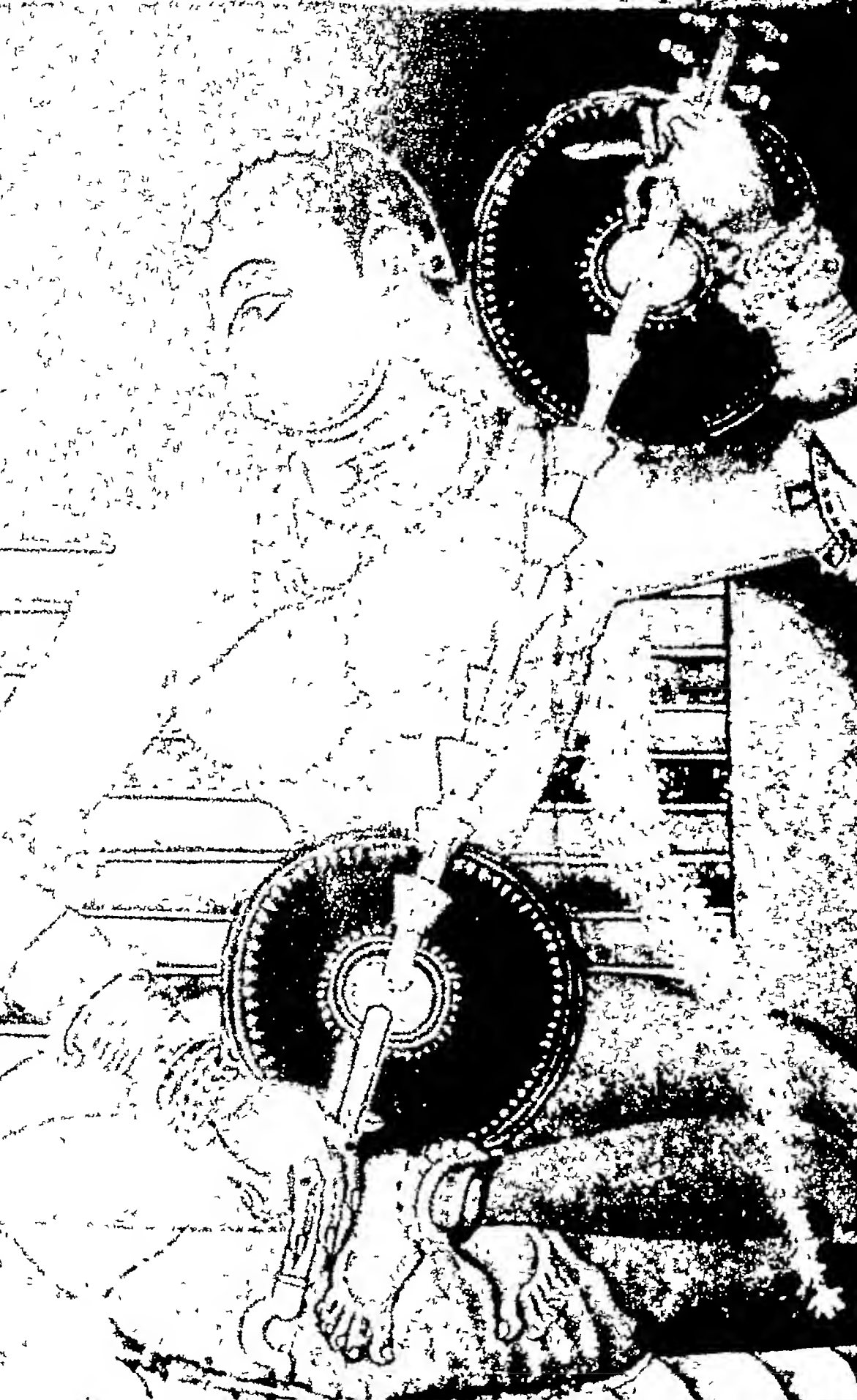
### ŚLOKA 63

The first teacher in matters of good conduct is our conscience To know what is right and what is wrong we can also turn to God, to our *satguru* and *swāmīs*, to scripture and to our elders, family and trusted friends Aum

### BHĀSHYA

Divine laws cannot be avoided They do not rule us from above but are wrought into our very nature Even death cannot efface the *karma* created by evil deeds Good conduct alone can resolve woeful *karmas* Therefore, it is essential that we learn and adhere to good conduct Good people are the best teachers of good conduct, and should be sought out and heeded when we need help or advice Talk with them, the wise ones, and in good judgment be guided accordingly Ethical scriptures should be read and studied regularly and their wisdom followed The loud voice of our soul, ever heard within our conscience, is a worthy guide When we grasp the subtle mechanism of *karma*, we wisely follow the good path Good conduct, or *sadāchāra*, for the Hindu is summarized in five obligatory duties, called *pañcha nitya karmas* virtuous living, *dharma*, worship, *upāsanā*, holy days, *utsava*, pilgrimage, *tīrthayātrā*, and sacraments, *sam-skāras* The *Vedas* offer this guidance, "If you have doubt concerning conduct, follow the example of high souls who are competent to judge, devout, not led by others, not harsh, but lovers of virtue" Aum Namah Śivāya





## What Are the Ten Classical Restraints?

### ŚLOKA 64

Hinduism's ethical restraints are contained in ten simple precepts called *yamas*. They define the codes of conduct by which we harness our instinctive forces and cultivate the innate, pristine qualities of our soul. Aum

### BHĀSHYA

The *yamas* and *niyamas* are scriptural injunctions for all aspects of thought and behavior. They are advice and simple guidelines, not commandments. The ten *yamas*, defining the ideals of *charyā*, are 1) *ahimsā*, "noninjury," do not harm others by thought, word or deed, 2) *satya*, "truthfulness," refrain from lying and betraying promises, 3) *asteya*, "nonstealing," neither steal nor covet nor enter into debt, 4) *brahmacharya*, "divine conduct," control lust by remaining celibate when single, leading to faithfulness in marriage, 5) *kṣamā*, "patience," restrain intolerance with people and impatience with circumstances; 6) *dhṛiti*, "steadfastness," overcome nonperseverance, fear, indecision and changeableness, 7) *dayā*, "compassion," conquer callous, cruel and insensitive feelings toward all beings, 8) *ārjaya*, "honesty," renounce deception and wrongdoing, 9) *mitāhāra*, "moderate appetite," neither eat too much, nor consume meat, fish, fowl or eggs, 10) *śauca*, "purity," avoid impurity in body, mind and speech. The *Vedas* proclaim, "To them belongs yon stainless Brahma world in whom there is no crookedness and falsehood, nor trickery." Aum Namah Śivāya



## What Are the Ten Classical Observances?

### ŚLOKA 65

Hinduism's religious tenets are contained in ten terse precepts called *niyamas*. They summarize the essential practices that we observe and the soulful virtues and qualities we strive daily to perfect. Aum Namah Śivāya

### BHĀSHYA

Good conduct is a combination of avoiding unethical behavior and performing virtuous, spiritualizing acts. The accumulated wisdom of thousands of years of Hindu culture has evolved ten *niyamas*, or religious observances. These precepts defining the ideals of *kriyā* are: 1) *hrī*, "remorse," be modest and show shame for misdeeds, 2) *santoshā*, "contentment," seek joy and serenity in life, 3) *dāna*, "giving," tithe and give creatively without thought of reward, 4) *āstikya*, "faith," believe firmly in God, Gods, *guru* and the path to enlightenment, 5) *Īśvara-pūjāna*, "worship," cultivate devotion through daily *pūjā* and meditation, 6) *siddhānta śravaṇa*, "scriptural listening," study the teachings and listen to the wise of one's lineage, 7) *mati*, "cognition," develop a spiritual will and intellect with a *guru's* guidance, 8) *vrata*, "sacred vows," fulfill religious vows, rules and observances faithfully; 9) *japa*, "recitation," chant holy *mantras* daily, 10) *tapas*, "austerity," perform *sādhana*, penance, *tapas* and sacrifice. The *Vedas* state, "They indeed possess that Brahma world who possess austerity and chastity, and in whom the truth is established." Aum Namah Śivāya

## Scriptures Speak on Good Conduct

You are in truth the visible Brahman I will proclaim you  
as the visible Brahman I will speak the right I will speak the  
truth May this protect me May it protect my teacher! May  
this protect me May it protect my teacher! Aum, peace,  
peace, peace!

*Yajur Veda*

The one who has not turned away from wickedness, who has no  
peace, who is not concentrated, whose mind is restless—he cannot  
realize the *ātman*, who is known by wisdom

*Yajur Veda*

The ten abstinences are nonviolence, truth, nonstealing, chastity,  
kindness, rectitude, forgiveness, endurance, temperance in food  
and purity

*Yajur Veda*

May He protect us both May He be pleased with us both May we  
work together with vigor, may our study make us illumined May  
there be no dislike between us Aum, peace, peace

*Yajur Veda*

The subtle Self is known by thought in which the senses in five  
different forms have centered The whole of men's thought is  
pervaded by the senses When thought is purified, the Self  
shines forth

*Atharva Veda*

They say of a man who speaks the truth, "He speaks the *dharma*,"  
or of a man who speaks the *dharma*, "he speaks the truth" Verily,  
both these are the same thing

*Yajur Veda*

Rescue the mind from qualities, make it pure and fix it in the heart  
That consciousness which manifests clearly thereafter must alone  
be aimed at and striven for

*Devikālottara Āgama*

Let the aspirant for liberation behave in an unselfish and kind way and give aid to all, let him undergo penance, and let him study this Āgama

*Devikālottara Āgama*

One who has recoiled from sensual pleasures and devoted himself to undefiled, pure wisdom is sure to achieve everlasting *moksha*, even if he does not consciously seek it

*Devikālottara Āgama*

I walk with those who go after God I live with those who sing His praise The Lord blesses those who seek Him With those who unite in Him, I unite in their feet

*Tirumantiram*

*Tapas*, *japa*, serenity, belief in God, charity, vows in Śaiva way and Siddhānta learning, sacrificial offerings, Śiva *pūjā* and speech pure—with these ten the one in *nyama* perfects his way

*Tirumantiram*

More precious than life itself is rectitude Those who practice rectitude possess everything that is worthwhile Humility, truthfulness, avoidance of killing and stealing, refraining from slandering others, absence of covetousness and so forth—these are the characteristics of a life of rectitude

*Natchintanai*

Keep the mind free of impurity That alone is the practice of virtue All else is nothing but empty display

*Tirukural*

Virtue yields heaven's honor and earth's wealth What is there then that is more fruitful for a man? Be unremitting in the doing of good deeds Do them with all your might and by every possible means

*Tirukural*

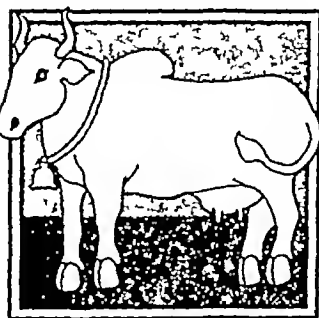
Purity of mind and purity of conduct—these two depend upon the purity of a man's companions

*Tirukural*



Ahimsā Maṇḍala

अहिंसामण्डल



Noninjury

*Go*, the cow, is a symbol of the earth, the nourisher, the ever-giving, undemanding provider. To the Hindu, all animals are sacred, and we acknowledge this reverence of life in our special affection for the gentle cow. Aum





## What Is the Great Virtue Called Ahimsā?

ŚLOKA 66

*Ahimsā*, or noninjury, is the first and foremost ethical principle of every Hindu. It is gentleness and nonviolence, whether physical, mental or emotional. It is abstaining from causing hurt or harm to all beings. Aum.

BHĀSHYA

To the Hindu the ground is sacred. The rivers are sacred. The sky is sacred. The sun is sacred. His wife is a Goddess. Her husband is a God. Their children are *devas*. Their home is a shrine. Life is a pilgrimage to liberation from rebirth, and no violence can be carried to the higher reaches of that ascent. While nonviolence speaks only to the most extreme forms of wrongdoing, *ahimsā*, which includes not killing, goes much deeper to prohibit the subtle abuse and the simple hurt. Rishi Patañjali described *ahimsā* as the great vow and foremost spiritual discipline which Truth-seekers must follow strictly and without fail. This extends to harm of all kinds caused by one's thoughts, words and deeds—including injury to the natural environment. Even the intent to injure, even violence committed in a dream, is a violation of *ahimsā*. Vedic *rishis* who revealed *dharma* proclaimed *ahimsā* as the way to achieve harmony with our environment, peace between peoples and compassion within ourselves. The Vedic edict is "Ahimsā is not causing pain to any living being at any time through the actions of one's mind, speech or body." Aum Namah Śivāya



## What Is the Inner Source of Noninjury?

### ŚLOKA 67

Two beliefs form the philosophical basis of noninjury  
The first is the law of *karma*, by which harm caused to  
others unfailingly returns to oneself The second is that  
the Divine shines forth in all peoples and things Aum

### BHĀSHYA

The Hindu is thoroughly convinced that violence he  
commits will return to him by a cosmic process that is  
unerring He knows that, by *karma*'s law, what we have  
done to others will be done to us, if not in this life then  
in another He knows that he may one day be in the  
same position of anyone he is inclined to harm or per-  
secute, perhaps incarnating in the society he most op-  
posed in order to equalize his hates and fears into a  
greater understanding The belief in the existence of God  
everywhere, as an all-pervasive, self-effulgent energy and  
consciousness, creates the attitude of sublime tolerance  
and acceptance toward others Even *tolerance* is insuffi-  
cient to describe the compassion and reverence the Hin-  
du holds for the intrinsic sacredness within all things  
Therefore, the actions of all Hindus living in the higher  
nature are rendered benign, or *ahimsā* One would not  
hurt that which he reveres The *Vedas* pronounce, "He  
who, dwelling in all things, yet is other than all things,  
whom all things do not know, whose body all things are,  
who controls all things from within—He is your soul,  
the Inner Controller, the Immortal" Aum Namah Śivāya



## What Is the Inner Source of Violence?

### ŚLOKA 68

Violence is a reflection of lower, instinctive consciousness—fear, anger, greed, jealousy and hate—based in the mentality of separateness and unconnectedness, of good and bad, winners and losers, mine and yours Aum

### BHĀSHYA

Every belief creates certain attitudes. Attitudes govern our actions. Our actions can thus be traced to our inmost beliefs about ourself and the world around us. If those beliefs are erroneous, our actions will not be in tune with the universal *dharma*. For instance, the beliefs in the duality of self and other, of eternal heaven and hell, victors and vanquished, white forces and dark forces, create the attitudes that we must be on our guard, and are justified in giving injury, physically, mentally and emotionally to those whom we judge as bad, pagan, alien or unworthy. Such thinking leads to rationalizing so-called righteous wars and conflicts. As long as our beliefs are dualistic, we will continue to generate antagonism, and that will erupt here and there in violence. Those living in the lower, instinctive nature are society's antagonists. They are self-assertive, territorial, competitive, jealous, angry, fearful and rarely penitent of their hurtfulness. Many take sport in killing for the sake of killing, thieving for the sake of theft. The *Vedas* indicate, "This soul, verily, is overcome by nature's qualities. Now, because of being overcome, he goes on to confusedness." Aum Namah Śivāya



## Is Vegetarianism Integral to Noninjury?

### ŚLOKA 69

Hindus teach vegetarianism as a way to live with a minimum of hurt to other beings, for to consume meat, fish, fowl or eggs is to participate indirectly in acts of cruelty and violence against the animal kingdom Aum

### BHĀSHYA

The abhorrence of injury and killing of any kind leads quite naturally to a vegetarian diet, *śākāhāra*. The meat-eater's desire for meat drives another to kill and provide that meat. The act of the butcher begins with the desire of the consumer. Meat-eating contributes to a mentality of violence, for with the chemically complex meat ingested, one absorbs the slaughtered creature's fear, pain and terror. These qualities are nourished within the meat-eater, perpetuating the cycle of cruelty and confusion. When the individual's consciousness lifts and expands, he will abhor violence and not be able to even digest the meat, fish, fowl and eggs he was formerly consuming. India's greatest saints have confirmed that one cannot eat meat and live a peaceful, harmonious life. Man's appetite for meat inflicts devastating harm on the earth itself, stripping its precious forests to make way for pastures. The *Tirukural* candidly states, "How can he practice true compassion who eats the flesh of an animal to fatten his own flesh? Greater than a thousand *ghee* offerings consumed in sacrificial fires is not to sacrifice and consume any living creature" Aum Namah Śivāya.





## How Can Peace on Earth Be Achieved?

### ŚLOKA 70

Peace is a reflection of spiritual consciousness. It begins within each person, and extends to the home, neighborhood, nation and beyond. It comes when the higher nature takes charge of the lower nature. Aum Namah Śivāya

### BHĀSHYA

Until we have peace in our own heart, we can't hope for peace in the world. Peace is the natural state of the mind. It is there, inside, to be discovered in meditation, maintained through self-control, and then radiated out to others. The best way to promote peace is to teach families to be peaceful within their own homes by settling all conflicts quickly. At a national and international level, we will enjoy more peace as we become more tolerant. Religious leaders can help by teaching their congregations how to live in a world of differences without feeling threatened, without forcing their ways or will on others. World bodies can make laws which deplore and work to prevent crimes of violence. It is only when the higher-nature people are in charge that peace will truly come. There is no other way, because the problems of conflict reside within the low-minded group who only know retaliation as a way of life. The *Vedas* beseech, "Peace be to the earth and to airy spaces! Peace be to heaven, peace to the waters, peace to the plants and peace to the trees! May all the Gods grant to me peace! By this invocation of peace may peace be diffused!" Aum Namah Śivāya

## Scriptures Speak on Noninjury

Nonviolence is all the offerings Renunciation is the priestly  
honorarium The final purification is death Thus all the Divinities  
are established in this body *Yajur Veda*

If we have injured space, the earth or heaven, or if we have offended  
mother or father, from that may Agni, fire of the house, absolve us  
and guide us safely to the world of goodness *Atharva Veda*

You must not use your God-given body for killing God's creatures,  
whether they are human, animal or whatever *Yajur Veda*

To the heavens be peace, to the sky and the earth, to the  
waters be peace, to plants and all trees, to the Gods be peace, to  
Brahman be peace, to all men be peace, again and again—peace  
also to me! *Yajur Veda*

Protect both our species, two-legged and four-legged.  
Both food and water for their needs supply May they with  
us increase in stature and strength Save us from hurt all  
our days, O Powers! *Rig Veda*

O earthen vessel, strengthen me May all beings regard me with  
friendly eyes! May I look upon all creatures with friendly eyes!  
With a friend's eye may we regard each other! *Yajur Veda*

No pain should be caused to any created being  
or thing *Devikālottara Āgama*

When mindstuff is firmly based in waves of *ahimsā*,  
all living beings cease their enmity in the presence of such  
a person *Yoga Sūtras*

*Ḥimsā* is to act against the spirit divine of the *Vedas*. It is to act against the dictates of *dharma*. *Aḥimsā* is the understanding of the fundamental truth that the *ātman* is imperishable, immutable and all-pervading

*Sūta Samhitā*

He who sees that the Lord of all is ever the same in all that is—immortal in the field of mortality—he sees the truth. And when a man sees that the God in himself is the same God in all that is, he hurts not himself by hurting others. Then he goes, indeed, to the highest path

*Bhagavad Gītā*

The purchaser of flesh performs *ḥimsā* (violence) by his wealth, he who eats flesh does so by enjoying its taste, the killer does *ḥimsā* by actually tying and killing the animal. Thus, there are three forms of killing: he who brings flesh or sends for it, he who cuts off the limbs of an animal, and he who purchases, sells or cooks flesh and eats it—all of these are to be considered meat-eaters

*Mahābhārata*

Nonviolence, truth, freedom from anger, renunciation, serenity, aversion to fault-finding, sympathy for all beings, peace from greedy cravings, gentleness, modesty, steadiness, energy, forgiveness, fortitude, purity, a good will, freedom from pride—these belong to a man who is born for heaven

*Bhagavad Gītā*

Meat can never be obtained without injury to living creatures, and injury to sentient beings is detrimental to the attainment of heavenly bliss, let him therefore shun meat

*Manu Dharma Śāstras*

Worthless are those who injure others vengefully, while those who stoically endure are like stored gold. Let him who wishes to be free from affliction's pain avoid inflicting harm on others

*Tirukural*



Grihastha Upanishad

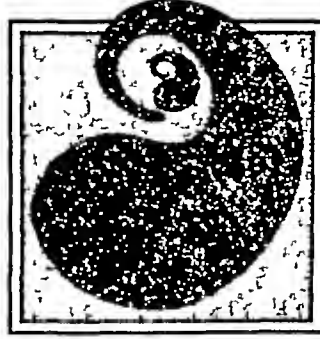
गृहस्थ उपनिषद्



Family Life



Dampati Maṇḍala  
दंपतिमण्डल



# Husband and Wife

*Mankolam*, the pleasing paisley design, is modeled after a mango and associated with Lord Ganeśa. Mangos are the sweetest of fruits, symbolizing auspiciousness and the happy fulfillment of legitimate worldly desires. Aum





## What Is the Central Purpose of Marriage?

### ŚLOKA 71

The two purposes of marriage are the mutual support, both spiritual and material, of man and wife, and bringing children into the world. Marriage is a religious sacrament, a human contract and a civil institution. Aum.

### BHĀSHYA

Through marriage, a man and a woman each fulfill their *dharma*, becoming physically, emotionally and spiritually complete. He needs her tenderness, companionship and encouragement, while she needs his strength, love and understanding. Their union results in the birth of children and the perpetuation of the human race. Marriage is a three-fold state: it is a sacrament, a contract and an institution. As a sacrament, it is a spiritual union in which man and woman utter certain vows one to another and thus bind themselves together for life and for their souls' mutual benefit. As a contract, it is a personal agreement to live together as husband and wife, he to provide shelter, protection, sustenance, and she to care for the home and bear and nurture their children. As an institution, marriage is the lawful custom in society, bringing stability to the family and the social order. Marriage is a *jīvayajña*, a sacrifice of each small self to the greater good of the family and society. The *Vedas* exclaim, "I am he, you are she, I am song, you are verse, I am heaven, you are earth. We two shall here together dwell, becoming parents of children." Aum Namah Śivāya



## What Are the Duties of the Husband?

### ŚLOKA 72

It is the husband's duty, his *purusha dharma*, to protect and provide for his wife and children. He, as head of the family, *griheśvara*, is responsible for its spiritual, economic, physical, mental and emotional security. Aum.

### BHĀSHYA

By their physical, mental and emotional differences, the man is suited to work in the world and the woman to bear and raise their children in the home. The husband is, first, an equal participant in the procreation and upbringing of the future generation. Second, he is the generator of economic resources necessary for society and the immediate family. The husband must be caring, understanding, masculine, loving, affectionate, and an unselfish provider, to the best of his ability and through honest means. He is well equipped physically and mentally for the stress and demands placed upon him. When he performs his *dharma* well, the family is materially and emotionally secure. Still, he is not restricted from participation in household chores, remembering that the home is the wife's domain and she is its mistress. The *Vedas* implore, "Through this oblation, which invokes prosperity, may this bridegroom flourish anew, may he, with his manly energies, flourish the wife they have brought to him. May he excel in strength, excel in royalty! May this couple be inexhaustible in wealth that bestows luster a thousand fold!" Aum Namah Śivāya



## What Are Special Duties of the Wife?

### ŚLOKA 73

It is the wife's duty, her *strī dharma*, to bear, nurse and raise the children. She is the able homemaker, standing beside her husband as the mother and educator of their children and the home's silent leader, *grihinī*. Aum

### BHĀSHYA

The biological differences between man and woman are part of their human *dharma*. The two together constitute a whole. They are equal partners in joy and sorrow, companions and helpmates, yet their functions differ. The Hindu home and family is the fortress of the Sanātana Dharma, which the wife and mother is duty-bound to maintain and thus to perpetuate the faith and create fine citizens. As long as the husband is capable of supporting the family, a woman should not leave the home to work in the world, though she may earn through home industry. The spiritual and emotional loss suffered by the children and the bad *karma* accrued from having a wife and mother work outside the home is never offset by the financial gain. The woman's more intuitive and emotional qualities of femininity, gentleness, modesty, kindness and compassion are needed for the children's proper care and development. The *Vedas* encourage, "May happiness await you with your children! Watch over this house as mistress of the home. Unite yourself wholly with your husband. Thus authority in speech till old age will be yours." Aum Namah Śivāya



## What Is the Hindu View of Sexuality?

### ŚLOKA 74

The purpose of sexual union is to express and foster love's beautiful intimacy and to draw husband and wife together for procreation. While offering community guidance, Hinduism does not legislate sexual matters. Aum

### BHĀSHYA

Sexual intercourse is a natural reproductive function, a part of the instinctive nature, and its pleasures draw man and woman together that a child may be conceived. It also serves through its intimacy to express and nurture love. It is love which endows sexual intercourse with its higher qualities, transforming it from an animal function to a human fulfillment. Intensely personal matters of sex as they affect the family or individual are not legislated, but left to the judgment of those involved, subject to community laws and customs. Hinduism neither condones nor condemns birth control, sterilization, masturbation, homosexuality, petting, polygamy or pornography. It does not exclude or draw harsh conclusions against any part of human nature, though scripture prohibits adultery and forbids abortion except to save a mother's life. Advice in such matters should be sought from parents, elders and spiritual leaders. The only rigid rule is wisdom, guided by tradition and virtue. The *Vedas* beseech, "May all the divine powers together with the waters join our two hearts in one! May the Messenger, the Creator and holy Obedience unite us" Aum Namah Śivāya





## What Is the Relation of Sex to Marriage?

### ŚLOKA 75

Wisdom demands that the intimacies of sexual intercourse be confined to marriage. Marriages that are free of prior relationships are the truest and strongest, seldom ending in separation or divorce Aum Namah Śivāya

### BHĀSHYA

When a virgin man and woman marry and share physical intimacy with each other, their union is very strong and their marriage stable. This is because their psychic nerve currents, or *nāḍīs*, grow together and they form a one body and a one mind. Conversely, if the man or woman have had intercourse before the marriage, the emotional-psychic closeness of the marriage will suffer, and this in proportion to the extent of promiscuity. For a marriage to succeed, sexual intercourse must be preserved for husband and wife. Each should grow to understand the other's needs and take care to neither deny intercourse to the married partner nor make excessive demands. A healthy, unrepressed attitude should be kept regarding sexual matters. Boys and girls must be taught to value and protect their chastity as a sacred treasure, and to save the special gift of intimacy for their spouse. They should be taught the importance of loyalty in marriage and to avoid even the thought of adultery. The *Vedas* intone, "Sweet be the glances we exchange, our faces showing true concord. Enshrine me in your heart and let one spirit dwell with us." Aum Namah Śivāya

## Scriptures Speak on Man and Wife

O Divines, may the husband and wife who with one accord offer the elixer of dedication with pure heart and propitiate you with the milk of sweet devotional prayers, constantly associated—may they acquire appropriate food, may they be able to offer sacrifice, and may they never fail in strength and vigor *Rig Veda*

May Prajāpati grant to us an issue, Aryaman keep us till death in holy marriage! Free from ill omens, enter the home of your husband Bring blessing to both humans and cattle *Rig Veda*

May the Provident One lead you, holding your hand! May the two Aśvins transport you on their chariot! Enter your house as that household's mistress. May authority in speech ever be yours! *Rig Veda*

O man and woman, having acquired knowledge from the learned, proclaim amongst the wise the fact of your intention of entering the married life Attain to fame, observing the noble virtue of non-violence, and uplift your soul Shun crookedness Converse together happily Living in a peaceful home, spoil not your life Spoil not your progeny In this world, pass your life happily, on this wide earth full of enjoyment! *Yajur Veda*

Love, children, happiness and wealth will come to answer your hopes Devoted to your husband's needs, be girded for immortality! *Atharva Veda*

Not evil-eyed nor harmful to your husband, kind to dumb beasts, radiant, gentle-hearted, pleasing, beloved by the Gods, bring forth heroes To menfolk and beasts alike bring blessing *Rig Veda*

Divine Architect of the universe, well pleased, may you  
give us procreant vigor, whence a brave son—skilled in action,  
lover of divine powers and resolute like grinding stones—  
be born

*Rīg Veda*

Unite, O Lord, this couple like a pair of lovebirds  
May they surrounded by children be, living both long  
and happily

*Atharva Veda*

May the Lord of the clouds protect our stores, piled high in our  
homes! May the Lord of the clouds give us vitality in our homes,  
granting goods and riches!

*Atharva Veda*

Let there be faithfulness to each other until death  
This, in short, should be known as the highest duty of husband  
and wife So let husband and wife ever strive, doing all their  
duties, that they may not, separated from each other,  
wander apart

*Manu Dharma Śāstras*

You are firm and I see you Be firm with me, O flourishing one!  
Bṛihaspati has given you to me, so live with me a hundred years  
bearing children by me, your husband

*Pāraskara Grihya Sūtras*

A worthy wife is the blessing of a home, and good children are its  
precious adornment

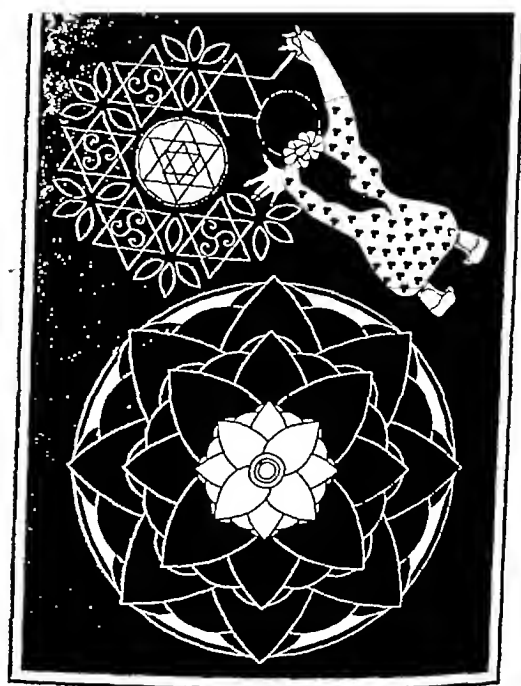
*Tirukural*

There is no greater dignity than that of the man who declares, "I  
will never cease in laboring to advance my family"

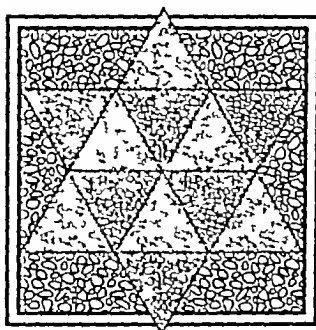
*Tirukural*

Whatever the work may be, a man should train himself to  
carry it out with perseverance, devotion and joy By disciplining  
himself in this way he will acquire steadiness of mind, that is to say,  
the mind will become one-pointed.

*Natchintanaṭi*



# Vivāha Maṇḍala विवाहमण्डल



## Marriage

*Shaṭkona*, “six-pointed star,” is two interlocking triangles, the upper stands for Śiva, *puruṣa* and fire, the lower for Śakti, *prakṛiti* and water. Their union gives birth to Sanatkumāra, whose sacred number is six. Aum



## What Is the Basis for a Happy Marriage?

### ŚLOKA 76

A happy marriage is based first and foremost on a mature love, not a romantic ideal of love. It requires selflessness and constant attention. A successful marriage is one which both partners work at making successful. Aum

### BHĀSHYA

While not all marriages must be arranged, there is wisdom in arranged marriages, which have always been an important part of Hindu culture. Their success lies in the families' judgment to base the union on pragmatic matters which will outlast the sweetest infatuation and endure through the years. The ideal age for women is from 18 to 25, men from 21 to 30. Stability is enhanced if the boy has completed his education, established earnings through a profession and is at least five years older than the girl. Mature love includes accepting obligations, duties and even difficulties. The couple should be prepared to work with their marriage, not expecting it to take care of itself. It is good for bride and groom to write out a covenant by hand, each pledging to fulfill certain duties and promises. They should approach the marriage as holy, advancing both partners spiritually. It is important to marry a spouse who is dependable, chaste and serious about raising children in the Hindu way, and then worship and pray together. The *Vedas* say, "Devoted to sacrifice, gathering wealth, they serve the Immortal and honor the Gods, united in mutual love." Aum Namah Śivāya





## Must We Marry Within Our Religion?

### ŚLOKA 77

Tradition requires that the wife adopt the religion and lifestyle of her husband. Thus, Hindu women wanting to continue their family culture and religion will, in wisdom, marry a spouse of the same sect and lineage. Aum.

### BHĀSHYA

The mutual spiritual unfoldment of man and wife is a central purpose of marriage. When we marry outside our religion, we create disharmony and conflict for ourselves and our children. Such a marriage draws us away from religious involvement instead of deeper into its fulfillment. For marriage to serve its spiritual purpose to the highest, husband and wife should hold the same beliefs and share the same religious practices. Their harmony of minds will be reflected in the children. A man's choice of spouse is a simple decision, because his wife is bound to follow him. For a woman, it is a far more important decision, because her choice determines the future of her religious and social life. While his lifestyle will not change, her's will. Should a Hindu marry a non-Hindu, traditional wisdom dictates that the wife conform to her husband's heritage, and that the children be raised in his faith, with no conflicting beliefs or customs. The husband may be invited to convert to her faith before marriage. The *Vedas* pray, "United your resolve, united your hearts, may your spirits be one, that you may long together dwell in unity and concord!" Aum Namah Śivāya



# How Are Hindu Marriages Arranged?

## ŚLOKA 78

Marriage is a union not only of boy and girl, but of their families, too. Not leaving such crucial matters to chance, all family members participate in finding the most suitable spouse for the eligible son or daughter Aum

## BHĀSHYA

In seeking a bride for a son, or a groom for a daughter, the goal is to find a mate compatible in age, physique, education, social status, religion, character and personality. Elders may first seek a partner among families they know and esteem for the kinship bonds the marriage would bring. Astrology is always consulted for compatibility. Of course, mutual attraction and full consent of the couple are crucial. Once a potential spouse is selected, informal inquiries are made by a relative or friend. If the response is encouraging, the father of the girl meets the father of the boy and presents a proposal. Next, the families gather at the girl's home to get acquainted and to allow the couple to meet and discuss their expectations. If all agree to the match, the boy's mother adorns the girl with a gold necklace, or gifts are exchanged between families, signifying a firm betrothal. Rejoicing begins with the engagement ceremony and culminates on the wedding day. The *Vedas* say, "Straight be the paths and thornless on which our friends will travel to present our suit! May Aryaman and Bhaga lead us together! May heaven grant us a stable marriage!" Aum Namah Śivāya



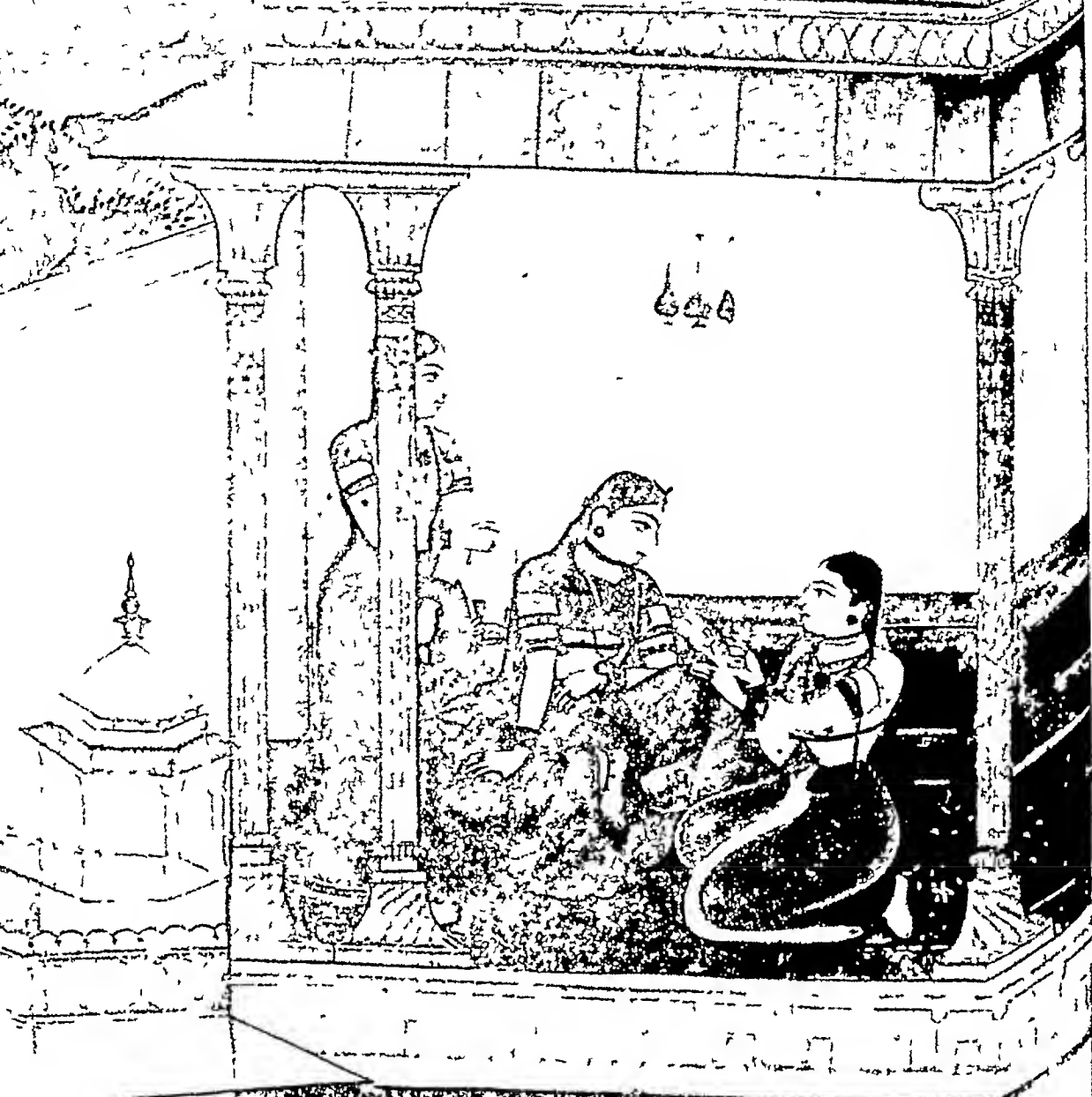
## What Is the Hindu Family Structure?

### ŚLOKA 79

The main Hindu social unit is the joint family, usually consisting of several generations living together under the guidance of the father and mother. Each joint family is part of a greater body called the extended family. Aum

### BHĀSHYA

A joint family lives under one roof. It includes a father and mother, their sons, grandsons and great-grandsons and all their spouses, as well as all daughters, granddaughters and great-granddaughters until they are married. The head of the family is the father, assisted by his wife, or in his absence the eldest son, encouraged by his mother, and in his absence, the next eldest brother. The family head delegates responsibilities to members according to their abilities. The mother oversees household activities, nurturance, hospitality and gift-giving. Religious observances are the eldest son's responsibility. The joint family is founded on selfless sharing, community ownership and the fact that each member's voice and opinion is important. The extended family includes one or more joint families, community elders, married daughters and their kindred, close friends and business associates. It is headed by the family *guru*, priests and *panditas*. The *Vedas* offer blessings: "Dwell in this home, never be parted! Enjoy the full duration of your days, with sons and grandsons playing to the end, rejoicing in your home to your heart's content." Aum Namah Śivāya



## How Are Marital Problems Reconciled?

### ŚLOKA 80

When problems arise in marriage, Hindus study the scriptures and seek advice of family, elders and spiritual leaders. A good marriage requires that the husband be masculine and the wife feminine. Aum Namah Śivāya

### BHĀSHYA

Success in marriage depends on learning to discuss problems with each other freely and constructively. Criticizing one another, even mentally, must be strictly avoided, for that erodes a marriage most quickly. Under no circumstance should a husband hit or abuse his wife, nor should a wife dominate or torment her husband. It is important to not be jealous or overly protective, but to have trust in one another and live up to that trust. Problems should be resolved daily before sleep. If inharmony persists, advice of elders should be sought. A reading and reaffirmation of original marriage covenants and an astrological assessment may provide a common point of reference and a foundation for mutual sacrifice and understanding. The husband who does not take the lead is not fulfilling his duty. The wife who takes an aggressive lead in the marriage makes her husband weak. She must be shy to make him bold. Couples keep a healthy attitude toward sex, never offering it as reward or withholding it as punishment. The *Vedas* say, "Be courteous, planning and working in harness together. Approach, conversing pleasantly, like-minded, united." Aum Namah Śivāya



## Scriptures Speak on Marriage

Of one mind and one purpose I make you, following one leader Be  
like the Gods, ever deathless! Never stop loving *Atharva Veda*

Have your eating and drinking in common. I bind you  
together Assemble for worship of the Lord, like spokes around  
a hub *Atharva Veda*

Thus steadfast and firm as a horse, we shall offer our praises,  
Omniscient Lord, forever Replete with food and with riches, being  
close to you always, may we never suffer reverses! *Atharva Veda*

May Mitra, Varuna and Aryaman grant us freedom and  
space enough for us and for our children! May we find pleasant  
pathways, good to travel! Preserve us evermore, O Gods,  
with blessings! *Rig Veda*

Let this man be again bedewed with this presented sacrifice,  
and comfort with the sap of life the bride whom they have brought  
to him *Atharva Veda*

Act like a queen to your husband's father, to your husband's  
mother likewise, and his sister To all your husband's brothers  
be queen *Rig Veda*

The Lord brings us riches, food in daily abundance, renown and  
hero sons to gladden our hearts So, like a father to his sons, be to  
us easy of entreaty Stay with us, O Lord, for our joy *Rig Veda*

When family life possesses love and virtue, that is both its essence  
and fruition *Tirukural*

May our minds move in accord May our thinking be in  
harmony—common the purpose and common the desire May our  
prayers and worship be alike, and may our devotional offerings be  
one and the same *Rīg Veda*

May this our Lord of cloudy sky, bedewed with liquid drops  
preserve unequalled riches in our homes Lord of the cloudy sky,  
bestow vigor and strength on our abodes Let wealth and treasure  
come to us *Atharva Veda*

The gift of a daughter, after decking her with costly garments  
and honoring her by presents of jewels, to a man learned in the  
*Veda* and of good conduct whom the father himself invites, is  
called the Brāhma rite *Manu Dharma Śāstras*

Endowed with the qualities of beauty and goodness,  
possessing wealth and fame, obtaining as many enjoyments  
as they desire and being most righteous, they will live a  
hundred years *Manu Dharma Śāstras*

Women must be honored and adorned by their fathers,  
brothers, husbands and brothers-in-law, who desire their  
own welfare Where women are honored, there the Gods are  
pleased But where they are not honored, no sacred rite  
yields rewards *Manu Dharma Śāstras*

I hold your heart in serving fellowship, your mind follows my  
mind In my word you rejoice with all your heart You are joined to  
me by the Lord of all creatures *Pāraskara Gṛihya Sūtras*

The foremost duty of the householder is to duly serve these five  
ancestors, God, guests, kindred and himself *Tirukural*



Apatya Maṇḍala

अपत्यमण्डल



Children

*Mūshika* is Lord Ganeśa's mount, the mouse, traditionally associated with abundance in family life. Under cover of darkness, seldom visible yet always at work, *Mūshika* is like God's unseen grace in our lives. Aum.



## What Is the Fulfillment of a Marriage?

### ŚLOKA 81

Children are the greatest source of happiness in marriage. Householder life is made rich and complete when sons and daughters are born, at which time the marriage becomes a family and a new generation begins Aum.

### BHĀSHYA

The total fulfillment of the *grihastha dharma* is children. Marriage remains incomplete until the first child is born or adopted. The birth of the first child cements the family together. At the birth itself, the community of guardian *devas* of the husband, wife and child are eminently present. Their collective vibration showers blessings upon the home, making of it a full place, a warm place. It is the duty of the husband and wife to become father and mother. This process begins prior to conception with prayer, meditation and a conscious desire to bring a high soul into human birth and continues with providing the best possible conditions for its upbringing. Raising several children rewards the parents and their offspring as well. Large families are more cohesive, more stable, and are encouraged within the limits of the family's ability to care for them. Parents, along with all members of the extended family, are responsible to nurture the future generation through childhood into puberty and adulthood. The *Vedas* exclaim, "Blessed with sons and daughters, may they enjoy their full extent of life, decked with ornaments of gold" Aum Namah Śivāya.



## What Are the Main Duties of Parents?

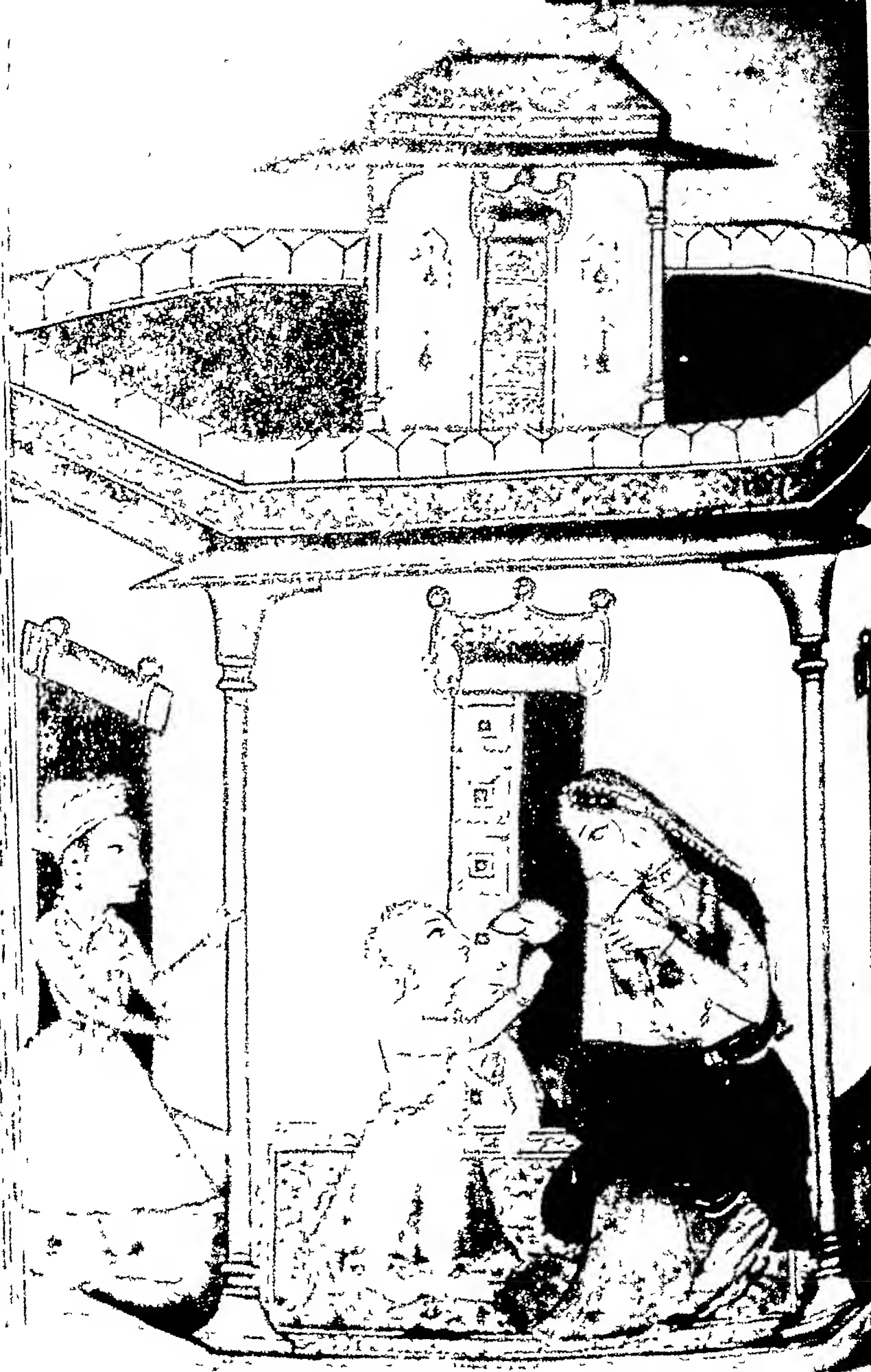
### ŚLOKA 82

The fundamental duty of parents is to provide food, shelter and clothing and to keep their children safe and healthy. The secondary duty is to bestow education, including instruction in morality and religious life Aum.

### BHĀSHYA

Assuring the health and well-being of their offspring is the most essential duty of parents to their children, never to be neglected. Beyond this, parents should provide a good example to their children, being certain that they are taught the Hindu religious heritage and culture along with good values, ethics, strength of character and discipline. Sons and daughters should worship regularly at *pūjā* with the parents, and the Hindu sacraments should all be provided. Education in all matters is the duty of the parents, including teaching them frankly about sex, its sacredness and the necessity to remain chaste until marriage. Children must learn to respect and observe civil law and to honor and obey their elders. Parents must love their children dearly, and teach them to love. The best way to teach is by example by their own life, parents teach their children how to live. The *Vedas* declare, "Of one heart and mind I make you, devoid of hate. Love one another as a cow loves the calf she has borne. Let the son be courteous to his father, of one mind with his mother. Let the wife speak words that are gentle and sweet to her husband" Aum Namah Śivāya





## How Strictly Must Children Be Guided?

### ŚLOKA 83

Parents should be most diligent in guiding their children toward virtue, protecting them from all bad company and influences, being strict yet never harsh or mean, allowing them prudent freedom in which to grow Aum

### BHĀSHYA

Children are constantly learning, and that learning must be guided carefully by the parents. The young's education, recreation and companions must be supervised. They should be taught the scriptures of their lineage. Their religious education is almost always in the hands of the parents. They should be disciplined to study hard, and challenged to excel and fulfill their natural talents. They should be praised and rewarded for their accomplishments. Children need and seek guidance, and only the parents can truly provide it. In general, it is the mother who provides love and encouragement, while the father corrects and disciplines. A child's faults if not corrected will be carried into adult life. Still, care should be taken to not be overly restrictive either. Children should never be struck, beaten, abused or ruled through a sense of fear. Children, be they young or old, have a *karma* and a *dharma* of their own. Their parents have a debt to pay them, and they have a debt to return later in life. The *Vedas* plead, "O friend of men, protect my children. O adorable one, protect my cattle. O sword of flame, protect my nourishment." Aum Namah Śivāya



## Should All Youths Be Urged to Marry?

### ŚLOKA 84

All but the rare few inclined to monastic life should be encouraged to marry and schooled in the skills they will need to fulfill *dharma*. Young boys destined to be monastics should be raised as their *satguru's* progeny. Aum

### BHĀSHYA

Traditionally, boys with monastic tendencies are encouraged and provided special training under their *satguru's* direction. It is considered a great blessing for the family to have a son become a monastic and later a *swāmī*. Generally, children should be taught to follow and prepare themselves for the householder path. Most boys will choose married life, and should be schooled in professional, technical skills. Girls are taught the refinements of household culture. Both girls and boys should be trained in the sacred Vedic arts and sciences, including the sixty-four crafts and social skills, called *kalās*. Boys benefit greatly when taught the profession of their father from a very young age. The mother is the role model for her daughters, whom she raises as the mothers of future families. Sons and daughters who are gay may not benefit from marriage, and should be taught to remain loyal in relationships and be prepared to cope with community challenges. The *Vedas* pray, "May you, O love divine, flow for the acquisition of food of wisdom and for the prosperity of the enlightened person who praises you, may you grant him excellent progeny" Aum Namah Śivāya



## How Is Family Harmony Maintained?

### ŚLOKA 85

In the Hindu family, mutual respect, love and understanding are the bedrock of harmony. By not fighting, arguing or criticizing, members cultivate a spiritual environment in which all may progress Aum Namah Śivāya

### BHĀSHYA

For a harmonious joint family, it is vital to make the home strong, the center of activity and creativity, kept beautiful and clean, a sanctuary for each member While striving to increase wealth, the wise families live within their means, content with what they have Activities are planned to bring the family close through shared experiences A gentle but firm hierarchy of respect for elders is maintained throughout the family In general, the younger, in humility, defers to the elder, allowing him or her the last word The elder is equally obliged to not misuse authority. Older children are responsible for the safety and care of their younger brothers and sisters Disputes among children are settled by their mother, but not kept a secret from the father. Actual discipline in the case of misconduct is carried out by the father. When disputes arise in the extended family, responsibility for restoring harmony falls first to the men However, any concerned member can take the lead if necessary The *Vedas* say of *grihastha* life, "I will utter a prayer for such concord among family members as binds together the Gods, among whom is no hatred" Aum Namah Śivāya

## Scriptures Speak on Children

O Lord of the home, best finder of riches for our children are you Grant to us splendor and strength, O Master of our home

*Yajur Veda*

I am inclined to adore you, the two sages, the ministrants at the places of work and worship of men, from whom all the prosperity is derived May you raise our offspring to a higher stature and help us to acquire precious treasures preserved amongst nature's bounties, when the worship is being conducted

*Rig Veda*

I know not how to stretch the threads or weave or discern the pattern of those who weave in the contest Whose son will be the one to speak so well as to surpass, advancing from below, his father?

*Rig Veda*

Keen of mind and keen of sight, free from sickness, free from sin, rich in children, may we see you rise as a friend, O Sun, till a long life's end!

*Rig Veda*

Never may brother hate brother or sister hurt sister United in heart and in purpose, commune sweetly together

*Atharva Veda*

To you, O Lord, the Priest, beloved of all men, we bring our praise with reverence Keep watch over our children and ourselves, we pray Guard both our lives and our cattle

*Atharva Veda*

Let there be no neglect of the duties to the Gods and the fathers Be one to whom the mother is a God Be one to whom the father is a God Be one to whom the teacher is a God Be one to whom the guest is a God

*Yajur Veda*

If he should desire, "Let me be born here again," in whatever family he directs his attention, either the family of a *bīāhmin* or the family of a king, into that he will be born  
*Sāma Veda*

By honoring his mother he gains this world, by honoring his father the middle sphere, but by obedience to his teacher, the world of Brahman All duties have been fulfilled by him who honors those three  
*Manu Dharma Śāstras*

Among those who strive for liberation, the foremost are they who live the blessed state of family life as it should be lived  
*Tirukural*

"Sweet are the sounds of the flute and the lute," say those who have not heard the prattle of their own children  
*Tirukural*

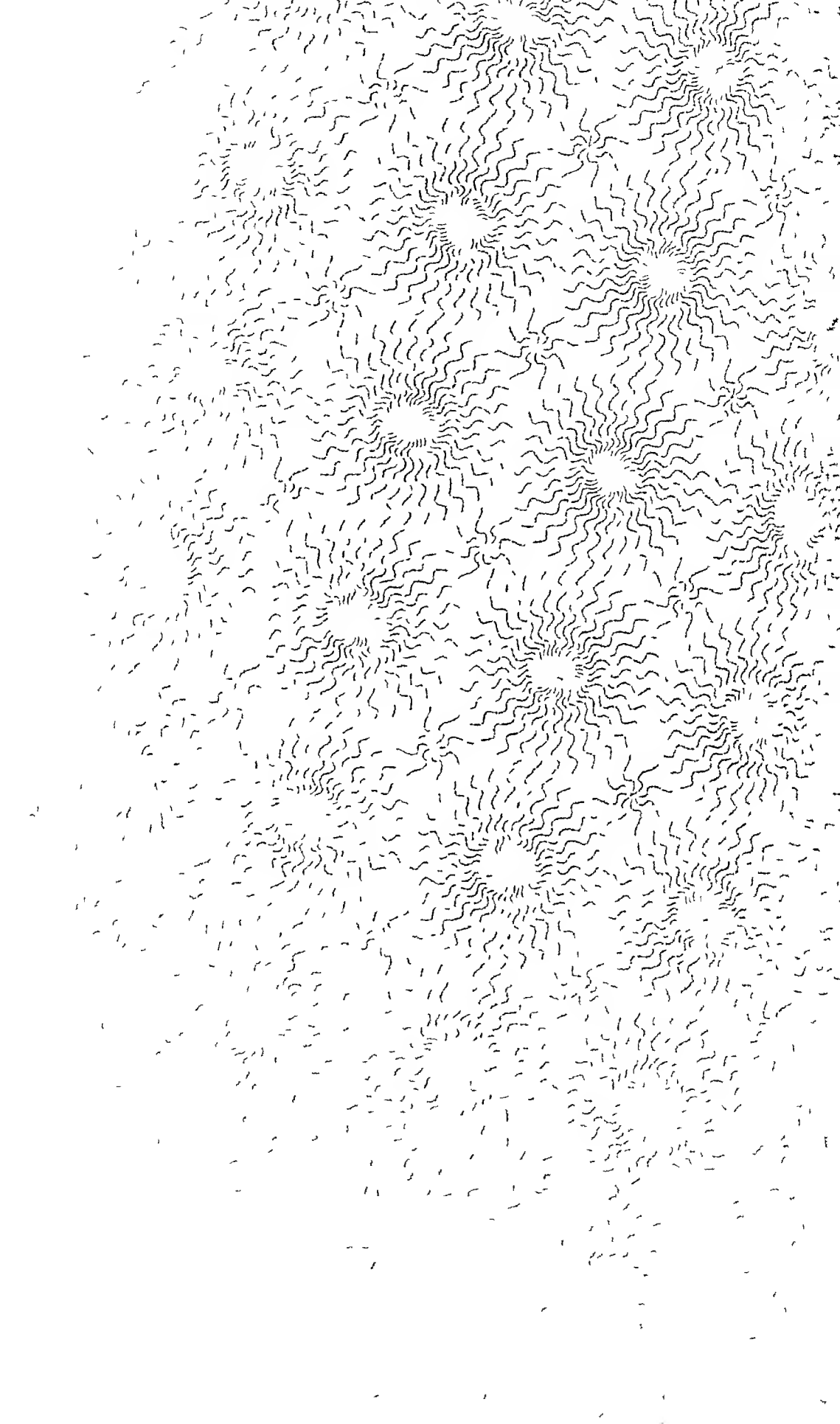
The father's duty to his son is to make him worthy of precedence in the assembly of the wise The son's duty to his father is to make the world ask, "By what great austerities did he merit such a son?"  
*Tirukural*

Of all a man's blessings we know of none greater than the begetting of children endowed with wisdom What pleasure it is to human beings everywhere when their children possess knowledge surpassing their own!  
*Tirukural*

Study well Be obedient Hear and follow the advice of your father, mother, brothers and sisters, and your aunt and uncle You alone always set a good example in obedience  
*Natchintanai*

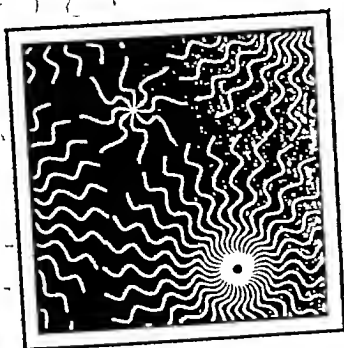
Do not neglect your duty, my son Be not troubled by sorrow or care Do not stray from the path of *dharma*, my son Awake and know yourself!  
*Natchintanai*





**Maṅgala Kriyā Upanishad**

**मङ्गलक्रिया उपनिषद्**

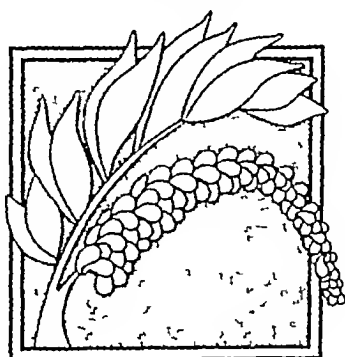


**Sacred Culture**



Bodhi Tantra Maṇḍala

बोधितन्त्रमण्डल



Ways of Wisdom

*Konrai*, Golden Shower, blossoms are the flowering symbol of Śiva's honeyed grace in our life. Associated with His shrines and temples throughout India, the *Cassia fistula* is lauded in numberless *Tirumurai* hymns. Aum



## How Do We Overcome Life's Obstacles?

### ŚLOKA 86

Just as a small leaf can obscure the sun when held before our eyes, so can the past cloud the present and hide our divinity With Vedic methods, or *tantras*, we remove impediments to reveal the ever-present inner light Aum

### BHĀSHYA

An ancient *Upanishad* defines twenty obstacles, *upasarga*, to spiritual progress: hunger, thirst, laziness, passion, lust, fear, shame, anxiety, excitement, adversity, sorrow, despair, anger, arrogance, delusion, greed, stinginess, ambitiousness, death and birth. Another obstacle is the intellect which, unguided by intuition, merely juggles memory and reason as a way of life. The experience of these impediments creates reactions that combine with the sum of all past impressions, *samskāras*, both positive and negative. Residing in the subconscious mind, these are the source of subliminal traits or tendencies, called *vāsanās*, which shape our attitudes and motivations. The troublesome *vāsanās* clouding the mind must be reconciled and released. There are beneficial *tantras* by which absolution can be attained for unhindered living, including *āyurveda*, *jyotiṣa*, daily *sādhana*, temple worship, selfless giving, the creative arts and the several *yogas*. The *Vedas* explain, "Even as a mirror covered with dust shines brightly when cleaned, so the embodied soul, seeing the truth of *ātman*, realizes oneness, attains the goal of life and becomes free from sorrow." Aum Namah Śivāya



## What Are the Hindu's Daily Yoga Practices?

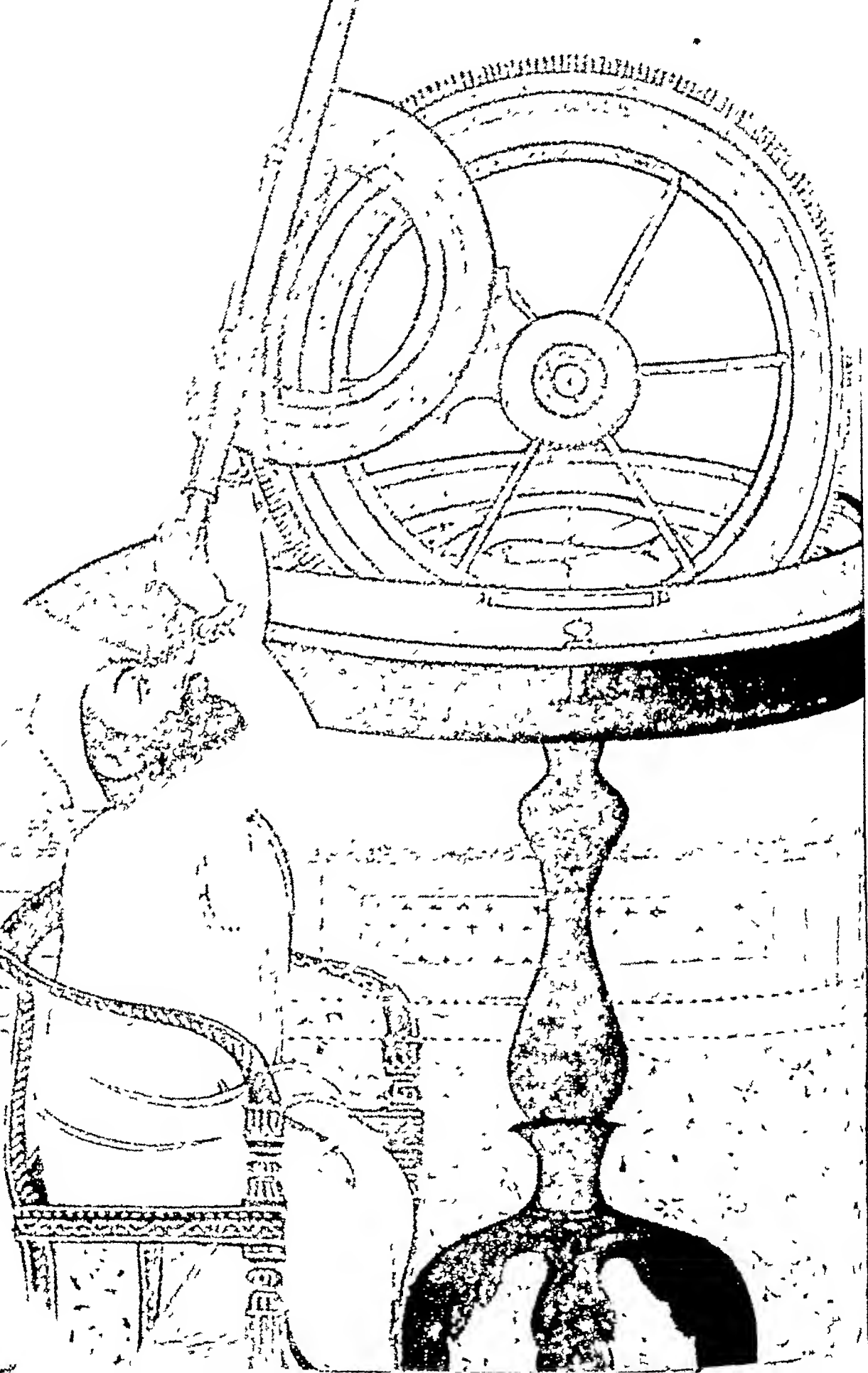
### ŚLOKA 87

Devout Hindus perform daily vigil, called *sandhyā upāsanā*, usually before dawn. This sacred period of *pūjā*, *japa*, chanting, singing, *haṭha yoga*, meditation and scriptural study is the foundation of personal life. Aum

### BHĀSHYA

Each day hundreds of millions of Hindus awaken for the last fifth of the night, bathe, don fresh clothing, apply sectarian marks, called *tilaka*, and sit in a clean, quiet place for religious disciplines. Facing east or north, the devotional *pūjā* rites of *bhakti yoga* are performed. *Haṭha yoga*, hymn singing, *japa* and chanting are often included. Then follows scriptural study and meditation, listening to the sound current and contemplating the moonlike inner light during *brāhma muhūrta*, the auspicious hour-and-a-half period before dawn. The duly initiated practice advanced *yogas*, such as those revealed in *Merging with Śiva*—but only as directed by their *guru*, knowing that unless firmly harnessed, the *kundalinī* can manifest uncontrollable desires. Through the day, *karma yoga*, selfless religious service, is performed at every opportunity. Besides these *yogas* of doing, Hindus practice the central *yoga* of being—living a joyful, positive, harmonious life. The *Vedas* declare, “The mind, indeed, is this fleeting world. Therefore, it should be purified with great effort. One becomes like that which is in one’s mind—this is the everlasting secret.” Aum Namah Śivāya.





## How Are Āyurveda and Jyotisha Used?

### ŚLOKA 88

*Āyurveda* is the Hindu science of life, a complete, holistic medical system *Jyotisha*, or Vedic astrology, is the knowledge of right timing and future potentialities. Both are vital tools for happy, productive living Aum

### BHĀSHYA

*Āyurveda*, rooted in the *Atharva Upaveda*, deals with both the prevention and cure of disease. Its eight medical arts, with their *mantras*, *tantras* and *yogas*, are based on spiritual well-being and encompass every human need, physical, mental and emotional *Āyurveda* teaches that the true healing powers reside in the mind at the quantum level Wellness depends on the correct balance of three bodily humors, called *doshas*, maintained by a nutritious vegetarian diet, *dharmic* living and natural healing remedies The kindred science of Vedic astrology, revealed in the *Jyotisha Vedāṅga*, likewise is vital to every Hindu's life It propounds a dynamic cosmos of which we are an integral part, and charts the complex influence on us of important stars and planets, according to our birth chart Knowing that the stars enliven positive and negative *karmas* we have brought into this life, in wisdom we choose an auspicious time, *śubha muhūrta*, for every important event An orthodox Hindu family is not complete without its *jyotisha sāstrī* or *āyurveda vaidya* The *Vedas* beseech, "Peaceful for us be the planets and the moon, peaceful the sun and *rāhu*" Aum Namah Śivāya.



## How Do Hindus Regard Art and Culture?

### ŚLOKA 89

Hindus of every sect cherish art and culture as sacred Music, art, drama and the dance are expressions of spiritual experience established in *śāstras* by God-inspired *rishis* as an integral flowering of temple worship Aum

### BHĀSHYA

Art and culture, from the Hindu perspective, are the sublime fruits of a profound civilization Every Hindu strives to perfect an art or craft to manifest creative benefits for family and community The home is a spiritual extension of the temple Graced with the sounds of Indian sacred music, it is adorned with religious pictures, symbols and icons The shrine is the most lavish room Children are raised to appreciate Hindu art, music and culture, carefully trained in the sixty-four *kalās* and protected from alien influences Human relationships are kept harmonious and uplifting through the attitudes, customs and refinements of Asian protocol, as revealed in *Living with Śiva* Hindu attire is elegantly modest Sectarian marks, called *tīlaka*, are worn on the brow as emblems of sectarian identity *Mantra* and prayer sanctify even simple daily acts—awakening, bathing, greetings, meals, meetings, outings, daily tasks and sleep. Annual festivals and pilgrimage offer a complete departure from worldly concerns The *Vedas* proclaim, “Let the drum sound forth and let the lute resound, let the strings vibrate the exalted prayer to God” Aum Namah Śivāya



## What Is the Hindu Outlook on Giving?

### ŚLOKA 90

Generous, selfless giving is among *dharma's* central fulfillments. Hospitality, charity and support of God's work on earth arises from the belief that the underlying purpose of life is spiritual, not material. Aum Namah Śivāya

### BHĀSHYA

Nowhere is giving better unfolded than in the ancient *Tirukural*, which says, "Of all duties, benevolence is unequaled in this world, and even in celestial realms. It is to meet the needs of the deserving that the worthy labor arduously to acquire wealth." Even the poorest Hindu practices charity according to his means. In this unselfish tradition, guests are treated as God. Friends, acquaintances, even strangers, are humbled by the overwhelming hospitality received. We share with the less fortunate. We care for the aged. We honor *swāmīs* with gifts of food, money and clothes. We encourage the spirit of helping and giving, called *dāna*, within the family, between families and their monastic and priestly communities. Many devout Hindus take the *daśama bhāga vrata*, a vow to pay ten percent of their income each month to an institution of their choice to perpetuate Sanātana Dharma. This centuries-old tithing practice is called *daśamāmśa*. The *Vedas* wisely warn, "The powerful man should give to one in straits, let him consider the road that lies ahead! Riches revolve just like a chariot's wheels, coming to one man now, then to another." Aum Namah Śivāya

## Scriptures Speak on Wisdom's Ways

May the Goddess of culture, associated with the models of other cultures, may the Goddess of wisdom in company with men, ordinary and intellectual, may the fire divine, and may the Goddess of divine speech with masters of language come to bless us and enshrine our hearts

*Rig Veda*

In vain the foolish man accumulates food I tell you, truly, it will be his downfall! He gathers to himself neither friend nor comrade Alone he eats, alone he sits in sin The ploughshare cleaving the soil helps satisfy hunger The traveler, using his legs, achieves his goal The priest who speaks surpasses the one who is silent The friend who gives is better than the miser

*Rig Veda*

*Śilpani*, works of art of man, are an imitation of divine forms By employing their rhythms, a metrical reconstitution is effected of the limited human personality

*Rig Veda*

There are five great sacrifices, namely, the great ritual services the sacrifice to all beings, sacrifice to men, sacrifice to the ancestors, sacrifice to the Gods, sacrifice to Brahman

*Yajur Veda*

Find a quiet retreat for the practice of *yoga*, sheltered from the wind, level and clean, free from rubbish, smoldering fires and ugliness, and where the sound of waters and the beauty of the place help thought and contemplation

*Yajur Veda*

Lightness, healthiness, steadiness, clearness of complexion, pleasantness of voice, sweetness of odor, and slight excretions—these, they say, are the first results of the progress of *yoga*

*Yajur Veda*

*Vāsanā* is divided into two, the pure and the impure If thou art led by the pure *vāsanās*, thou shalt thereby soon reach by degrees My Seat But should the old, impure *vāsanās* land thee in danger, they should be overcome through efforts *Yajur Veda*

Works of sacrifice, gift and self-harmony should not be abandoned, but should indeed be performed, for these are works of purification But even these works, Arjuna, should be done in the freedom of a pure offering, and without expectation of a reward This is My final word *Bhagavad Gītā*

Easy for all to offer in worship a green leaf to the Lord Easy for all to give a mouthful to the cow Easy for all to give a handful when sitting down to eat Easy for all to speak pleasant words to others *Tirumantiram*

So let my star be the sun or the moon, Mars or Mercury or Jupiter, let it be Venus, or Saturn or the two snakes! All the planets and stars are good stars for us, all bring good luck to Śiva's devotees! *Tirumurai*

Plough with truth Plant the seed of desire for knowledge Weed out falsehood Irrigate the mind with the water of patience Supervise your work by introspection and self-analysis Build the fence of *yama* and *niyama*, or right conduct and right rules You will soon attain Śivānanda, or eternal bliss of Śiva *Tirumurai*

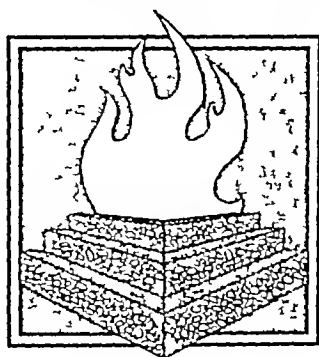
Moderately, moderately eat for your sustenance Take pains at all times to assimilate knowledge In your youth, learn the arts and the sciences To the mean and the miserly be not attached Foster, foster the friendship of well-nurtured people Live in happiness, saying you are lacking in nothing Look after, look after your brothers and kinfolk Inwardly and outwardly let your life be the same *Natchuntanai*





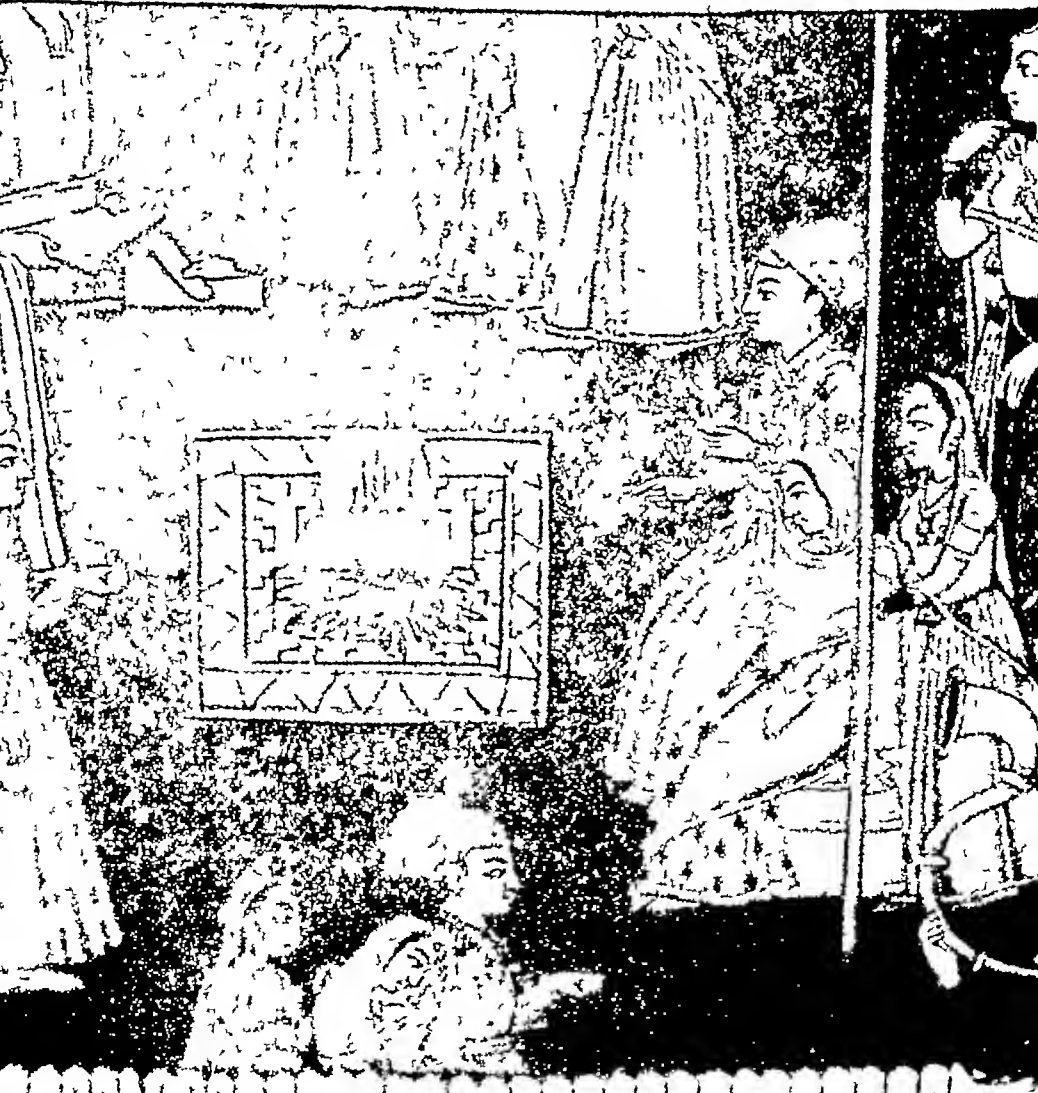
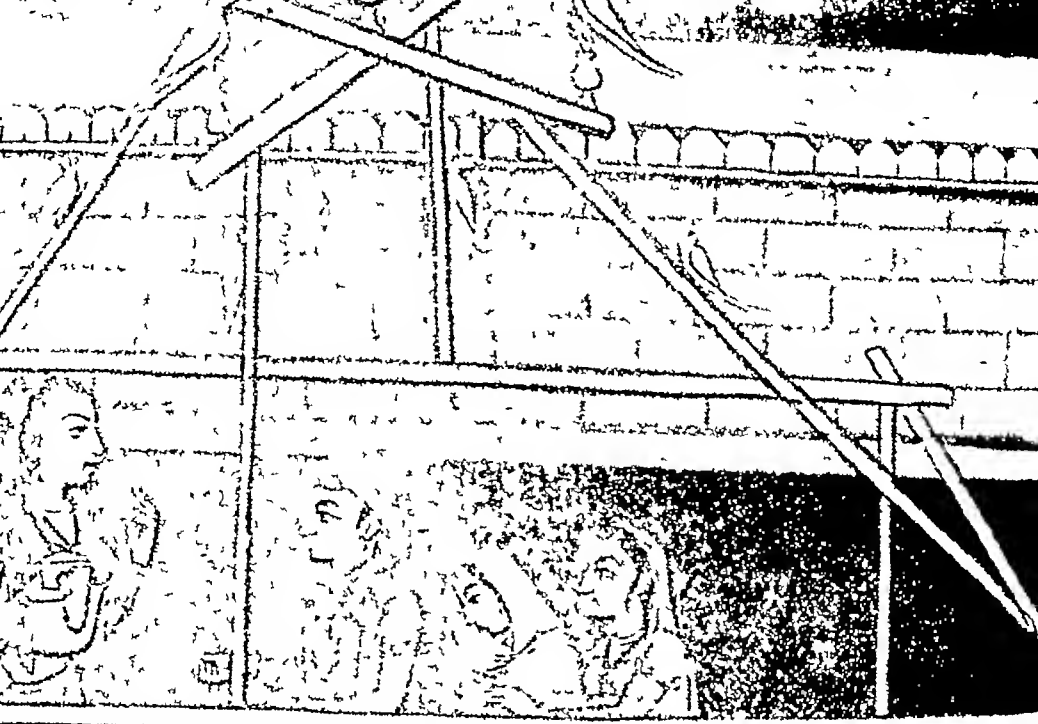
Saṁskāra Maṇḍala

संस्कारमण्डल



Sacraments

*Homakunda*, the fire altar, is the symbol of ancient Vedic rites. It is through the fire element, denoting divine consciousness, that we make offerings to the Gods. Hindu sacraments are solemnized before the *homa* fire. Aum



# What Are Hinduism's Rites of Passage?

## ŚLOKA 91

Hindus celebrate life's crucial junctures by holy sacraments, or rites of passage, called *samskāras*, which impress the subconscious mind, inspire family and community sharing and invoke the Gods' blessings Aum

## BHĀSHYA

For the Hindu, life is a sacred journey in which each milestone, marking major biological and emotional stages, is consecrated through sacred ceremony. Family and friends draw near, lending support, advice and encouragement. Through Vedic rites and *mantras*, family members or priests invoke the Gods for blessings and protection during important turning points, praying for the individual's spiritual and social development. There are many sacraments, from the rite of conception to the funeral ceremony. Each one, properly observed, empowers spiritual life and preserves Hindu culture, as the soul consciously accepts each succeeding discovery and duty in the order of God's creation. The essential *samskāras* are the rites of conception, the three-month blessing, hair-parting, birth, name-giving, head-shaving, first feeding, ear-piercing, first learning, puberty, marriage, elders' vows and last rites. The holy *Vedas* proclaim, "From Him come hymns, songs and sacrificial formulas, initiations, sacrifices, rites and all offerings. From Him come the year, the sacrificer and the worlds in which the moon shines forth, and the sun." Aum Namah Śivāya



## What Are the Sacraments of Childhood?

### ŚLOKA 92

The essential religious sacraments of childhood are the *nāmakarana*, name-giving, *chūdākarana*, head-shaving, *annaprāśana*, first solid food; *karnavedha*, ear-piercing, and *vidyārambha*, commencement of formal study Aum

### BHĀSHYA

*Samskāras* impress upon a child its holiness and innate possibilities for spiritual advancement The *nāmakarana* occurs in the temple or home, eleven to forty-one days after birth The baby's name, astrologically chosen, is whispered in the right ear by the father, marking the formal entry into Hinduism The head-shaving, *chūdākarana*, is performed at the temple between the thirty-first day and the fourth year The *annaprāśana* celebrates the child's first solid food, when sweet rice is fed to the baby by the father or the family *guru* Ear-piercing, *karnavedha*, held for both girls and boys during the first, third or fifth year, endows the spirit of health and wealth Girls are adorned with gold earrings, bangles and anklets, boys with two earrings and other gold jewelry The *vidyārambha* begins formal education, when children write their first letter in a tray of rice The *upanayana* begins, and the *samāvartana* ends, a youth's religious study The *Vedas* beseech, "I bend to our cause at this solemn moment, O Gods, your divine and holy attention May a thousand streams gush forth from this offering, like milk from a bountiful, pasture-fed cow." Aum Namah Śivāya



## What Are the Sacraments of Adulthood?

### ŚLOKA 93

The most important sacrament of adulthood is the *vivāha samskāra*, or marriage rite, preceded by a pledge of betrothal. A boy's or girl's coming of age is also consecrated through special ceremony in the home Aum.

### BHĀSHYA

As puberty dawns, the *ṛitu kāla* home-ceremony acknowledges a girl's first menses, and the *keśānta kāla* celebrates a boy's first beard-shaving. New clothing and jewelry fit for royalty are presented to and worn by the youth, who is joyously welcomed into the young adult community. Girls receive their first *sārī*, boys their first razor. Chastity is vowed until marriage. The next sacrament is the betrothal ceremony, called *nīśchītārtha* or *vāgdāna*, in which a man and woman are declared formally engaged by their parents with the exchange of jewelry and other gifts. Based on this commitment, they and their families begin planning a shared future. In the marriage sacrament, or *vivāha*, seven steps before God and Gods and tying the wedding pendant consecrate the union of husband and wife. This sacrament is performed before the *homa* fire in a wedding hall or temple and is occasioned by elaborate celebration. The *Grihya Sūtras* pronounce, "One step for strength, two steps for vitality, three steps for prosperity, four steps for happiness, five steps for cattle, six steps for seasons, seven steps for friendship. To me be devoted." Aum Namah Śivāya





## What Are the Child-Bearing Sacraments?

### ŚLOKA 94

The essential child-bearing *samskāras* are the *garbhādhāna*, rite of conception, the *punsavana*, third-month blessing; the *śimantonṇaya*, hair-parting ceremony, and the *jātakarma*, welcoming the new-born child. Aum

### BHĀSHYA

Conception, pregnancy's crucial stages and birth itself are all sanctified through sacred ceremonies performed privately by the husband. In the rite of conception, *garbhādhāna*, physical union is consecrated through prayer, *mantra* and invocation with the conscious purpose of bringing a high soul into physical birth. At the first stirring of life in the womb, in the rite called *punsavana*, special prayers are intoned for the protection and safe development of child and mother. Between the fourth and seventh months, in the *śimantonṇaya*, or hair-parting sacrament, the husband lovingly combs his wife's hair, whispers sweet words praising her beauty and offers gifts of jewelry to express his affection and support. Through the *jātakarma samskāra*, the father welcomes the newborn child into the world, feeding it a taste of honey and clarified butter and praying for its long life, intelligence and well-being. The *Vedas* proclaim, "That in which the prayers, the songs and formulas are fixed firm like spokes in the hub of a cartwheel, in which are interwoven the hearts of all beings—may that spirit be graciously disposed toward me!" Aum Namah Śivāya



## Are There Rites for the Wisdom Years?

### ŚLOKA 95

Entrance into the elder advisor stage at age 48, the marriage renewal at age 60, and the dawn of renunciation at 72 may be signified by ceremony Funeral rites, *antyeshti*, solemnize the transition called death Aum Namah Śivāya

### BHĀSHYA

Hindu society values and protects its senior members, honoring their experience and heeding their wise advice Age 48 marks the entrance into the *vānaprastha āśrama*, celebrated in some communities by special ceremony At age 60, husband and wife reaffirm marriage vows in a sacred ablution ceremony called *shashtyābda pūrti* Age 72 marks the advent of withdrawal from society, the *sannyāsa āśrama*, sometimes ritually acknowledged but never confused with *sannyāsa dīkshā* The *antyeshti*, or funeral ceremony, is a home sacrament performed by the family, assisted by a priest Rites include guiding the individual's transition into the higher planes, preparing the body, cremation, bone-gathering, dispersal of ashes, home purification and commemorative ceremonies, *śrāddha*, one week, one month and one year from the day of death, and sometimes longer, according to local custom Through the *antyeshti*, the soul is released to the holy feet of Śiva The *Vedas* counsel, "Attain your prime, then welcome old age, striving by turns in the contest of life May the Ordainer, maker of good things, be pleased to grant you length of days" Aum Namah Śivāya

## Scriptures Speak on Sacraments

Life universal shall guard and surround you. May Pūshan protect and precede you on the way! May Savitrī, the God, to that place lead you where go and dwell the doers of good deeds! *Rig Veda*

As days follow days in orderly succession, as seasons faithfully succeed one another, so shape the lives of these, O Supporter, that the younger may not forsake his elder *Rig Veda*

I take thy hand in mine for happy fortune that thou may reach old age with me, thy husband "This woman, strewing grains, prays thus, 'May I bring bliss to my relations. May my husband live long Svahā!'" *Rig Veda & Sāṅkhāyana Gṛihya Sūtras*

After completing the life of a student, let a man become a householder. After completing the life of a householder, let him become a forest dweller, let him renounce all things. Or he may renounce all things directly from the student state or from the householder's state, as well as from that of the forest dweller. *Yajur Veda*

Having reached the last order of life, one should sit in a solitary place in a relaxed posture, with pure heart, with head, neck and body straight, controlling all the sense organs, having bowed with devotion to the master. *Atharva Veda*

That the father and mother give birth to him from mutual desire, so that he is born from the womb, let this be known as his physical birth. But that birth which is given, according to the ordinance, through the Sāvitrī, by the preceptor who has mastered the Vedas, that is the true birth, the unaging and immortal. *Manu Dharma Śāstras*

With holy rites prescribed by the *Veda* must the ceremony on conception and other sacraments be performed for twice-born men, which sanctify the body and purify in this life and after death

*Manu Dharma Śāstras*

Let the father perform or cause to be performed the *nāmadheya*, the rite of naming the child, on the tenth or twelfth day after birth, or on a lucky lunar day, in a lucky *muhūrta* under an auspicious constellation

*Manu Dharma Śāstras*

The names of women should be easy to pronounce, not imply anything dreadful, possess a plain meaning, be pleasing and auspicious, end in long vowels and contain a word of benediction

*Manu Dharma Śāstras*

Having studied the *Vedas* in accordance with the rule, having begat sons according to the sacred law and having offered sacrifices according to his ability, he may direct his mind to final liberation

*Manu Dharma Śāstras*

The boy grows to youth and youth as surely to old age decays But time's changes teach them not that nothing abides He pervades this earth and the space beyond I long for His feet and desire there to remain

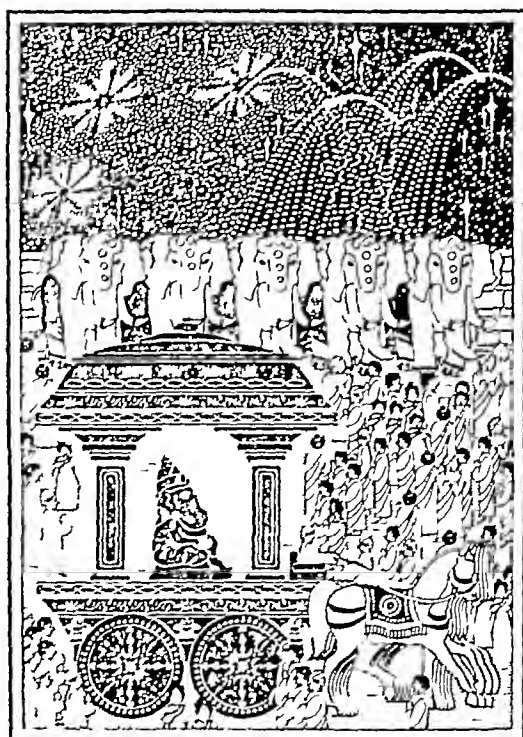
*Tirumantiram*

When the son is one year old, the *chūdākarana*, the tonsure of his head, should be performed, or before the lapse of the third year When he is sixteen years old, the *kesānta*, the shaving of his beard, is to be done, or according as it is considered auspicious by all

*Pāraskara Grihya Sūtras*

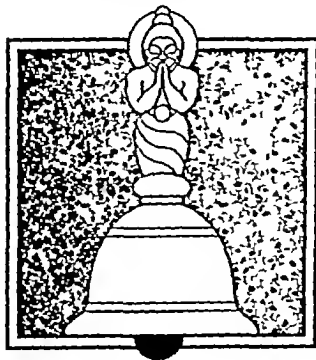
Knowingly or even unknowingly, intentionally or even unintentionally, a mortal, having gone to death in the Gangā, obtains heaven and *moksha*

*Padma Purāna*



Utsava Maṇḍala

उत्सवमण्डल



Festivals

*Ghanta* is the bell used in ritual *pūjā*, which engages all senses, including hearing. Its ringing summons the Gods, stimulates the inner ear and reminds us that, like sound, the world may be perceived but not possessed. Aum





## What Are the Festival Days of Śaivism?

### ŚLOKA 96

Festivals are special times of communion with God and Gods, of family and community sharing and *sādhana*. Śaivites observe numerous festivals in the temple and the home, and special holy days each week and month. Aum

### BHĀSHYA

Monday is the Hindu holy day in the North of India, and Friday in the South, set aside each week for attending the temple, cleaning and decorating the home shrine, devout prayer, *japa* and scriptural study. These are not days of rest, for we carry on our usual work. Among the major Deity festivals are Mahāśivarātri, Vaikāsi Viśākhā, Gaṇeśa Chaturthī, Skanda Shashthī, Kṛttikā Dīpa, Vināyaka Vratam, Ārdra Darśana and Tai Pusa. Temples also hold a ten-day annual festival called Brahmotsava, often on the Uttarāphalgunī *nakshatra* in March-April, as well as honor the anniversary day of their founding. Festivals are auspicious and sacred days of family and community togetherness, and of *sādhana*, fasting, meditation, worship and retreat from worldly concerns. Śaivites offer special prayers to Śiva, Gaṇeśa and Kārttikeya on propitious days each month according to the Hindu sacred calendar. The *Vedas* proclaim, "Behold now a man who unwinds and sets the thread, a man who unwinds it right up to the vault of heaven. Here are the pegs, they are fastened to the place of worship. The *Sāma Veda* hymns are used for weaving shuttles." Aum Namah Śivāya



## What Are the Primary Festivals to Śiva?

### ŚLOKA 97

Mahāśivarātri, Śiva's great night, venerates Paraśiva. Kṛttikā Dīpa celebrates the infinite light of Parāśakti. Ārdrā Darśana invokes the blessings of Parameśvara—Lord Śiva Natarāja in His blissful Cosmic Dance. Aum.

### BHĀSHYA

Mahāśivarātri is the night before the new-moon day in February-March. We observe it both as a discipline and a festivity, keeping a strict fast and all-night vigil, meditating, intoning Śiva's 1,008 names, singing His praise, chanting Śrī Rudram, bathing the Śivalinga and being near the *vairāgīs* as they strive to realize Paraśiva. On Kṛttikā Dīpa, the Kṛttikā *nakshatra* in November-December, we honor—with oil lamps everywhere, village bonfires and special temple *ārati*—God Śiva as an infinite pillar of light. This is an important festival in Murugan temples. On Ārdrā Darśana, during the Ārdrā *nakshatra* of December-January, Lord Natarāja receives elaborate *abhisheka* and is beseeched for *yogic* union, prosperity and matrimonial success. He is again lavishly invoked on the Uttarāphalgunī *nakshatra* in June-July and on four other days each year. Special monthly days for Śiva worship are the two 13th *tithis*, called *pradosha*. The *Vedas* proclaim, "The Lord, God, all-pervading and omnipresent, dwells in the heart of all beings. Full of grace, He ultimately gives liberation to all creatures by turning their faces toward Himself" Aum Namah Śivāya.



## What Are the Major Gaṇeśa Festivals?

### ŚLOKA 98

Ganeśa Chaturthī is a joyous celebration of Ganeśa's birthday. Vināyaka Vratam is twenty-one days of fasting and daily temple worship. Pañcha Ganapati is a five-day family festival of harmony and gift-giving Aum

### BHĀSHYA

On Ganeśa Chaturthī, in August-September, elaborate temple *pūjās* are held. Worship is also given in the home shrine to a clay image of Ganeśa that we make or obtain. At the end of the day, or after ten days, we join others in a grand parade, called *visarjana*, to a river, temple tank, lake or seashore, where we immerse the image, symbolizing Ganeśa's release into universal consciousness. During the twenty-one days of Vināyaka Vratam, in November-December, devotees vow to attend daily Ganeśa *pūjā*, fasting on water and taking a full meal after sunset. Pañcha Ganapati, December 21 to 25, is a modern five-day festival of gift-giving, dear to children. Families invoke His five *śaktis*, one on each day—creating harmony in the home, concord among relatives, neighbors and friends, good business and public relations, cultural upliftment and heartfelt charity. Ganeśa's monthly holy day is Chaturthī, the fourth *tithi* after the new moon. The *Vedas* implore, "O Lord of Categories, thou art the Lord, the seer of seers, unrivaled in wealth, king of elders, lord of the principle of principles. Hear us and take thy place, bringing with thee all enjoyments." Aum Namah Śivāya



## What Are the Main Kārttikeya Festivals?

### ŚLOKA 99

Vaikāṣī Viśākhā celebrates the anniversary of Lord Kārttikeya's creation. Skanda Shashthī is a six-day festival honoring His conquest of light over darkness. Tai Pusam is a time of *sādhana* and public penance. Aum

### BHĀSHYA

On Vaikāṣī Viśākhā day, Lord Kārttikeya's birthstar, Viśākhā *nakshatra*, in May-June, elaborate *abhisheka* is conducted in all His temples. It is a time of gift-giving to *panditas* and great souls, weddings, feedings for the poor, caring for trees, spiritual initiation, *dīkshā*, and conclaves of holy men. Skanda Shashthī is celebrated on the six days after the new moon in October-November with festive processions and *pūjās* invoking His protection and grace. It honors Kārttikeya's receiving the *vel*, His lance of spiritual illumination, *jñāna śakti*, and culminates in a dramatic victory celebration of spiritual light over *asuric* darkness. Tai Pusam occurs on Pushya *nakshatra* in January-February. During this festival we fast and perform public penance, called *kavadi*, seeking Kārttikeya's blessings to dispel our selfishness, pride and vanity. His special monthly days are Krittikā *nakshatra* and Shashthī, the sixth *tithi* after the new moon. The *Vedas* say, "Like the cry of watchful birds swimming in water, like the loud claps of thundering rain clouds, like the joyful streams gushing from the mountain, so have our hymns sounded forth to the Lord." Aum Namah Śivāya





## What Are Other Important Festivals?

### ŚLOKA 100

Besides the temple festivals, there is a multitude of home, community and national celebrations, notably *Dīpāvalī*, Hindu New Year, *Tai Pongal*, *guru pūjā* days, *kumbha melas*, *Jayantī* and *Guru Pūrnīmā* Aum Namah Śivāya.

### BHĀSHYA

*Dīpāvalī*, the “festival of lights” in October-November, is a most popular festival, esteemed as a day of Hindu solidarity, when all sects gather in love and trust. It begins the financial year and is celebrated by opening new accounts, giving greeting cards, clothing and other gifts and by lighting rows of oil lamps. Family bonds are strengthened and forgivenesses sought. The several Hindu New Years are important observations. *Tai Pongal*, in January-February, is a harvest thanksgiving and invocation for prosperity. God *Sūrya*, the Sun, is honored, and daughters are presented with gifts. We venerate saints and sages by conducting *guru pūjā* on the anniversary of their passing, or *mahāsamādhi*. We celebrate our *sat-guru*’s birthday, or *Jayantī*, with special *pūjā* to his *śrī pādukā*, “sandals,” or holy feet. We honor him again on *Guru Pūrnīmā*, the full moon of July. *Kumbha melas*, humanity’s largest gatherings, are held at four pilgrimage centers in India every three years. The *Vedas* proclaim, “Thus have we now approached the All-Knower, the one who is the best procurer of good things. Endow us, O Majesty, with strength and glory” Aum Namah Śivāya.

## Scriptures Speak on Festivals

Supported by whose protection heaven and earth, shining brightly and inspired in their spirit, manifest this glory, with whose effulgence does the risen sun shine forth? To whom else, besides that giver of happiness, can we offer all our devotion? *Rig Veda*

Let us now invoke for our aid the Lord of Speech, the Designer of all things that are, the inspirer of wisdom! May He, the ever-kindly, be well disposed to our summons, and may He, whose work is goodness, grant us His blessing! *Rig Veda*

The gift of wealth and victory in deeds, sweetest of garlands, honor and fame, too, love and esteem are His bounties—so even *devas* adore the elephant-faced One, in devotion sweet with cooped hands *Tirumurai*

Wherever I hear the sound of drums, the music of hymns, the *Vedas* chanted, there my heart remembers God our Master, the Lord who dwells in Itaimarutu *Tirumurai*

The Lord of Citticcaram shrine in Naraiyur, who has the river in His hair, the poison stain on His throat and the *Veda* on His tongue, goes resplendent in ceremonial dress as His devotees and perfected sages sing and dance His widespread fame, and the sound of festival drums beaten on the streets, where the temple car is pulled, spreads on every side *Tirumurai*

Pumpavai, O beautiful girl! Would you go without having seen, on the streets of great Mayilai, always busy with festive crowds, the festival of Uttarāphalgunī with its great sound of celebration, at which beautiful women sing and distribute alms, at the Lord's Kapaliccaram shrine, center of many festivals? *Tirumurai*

You took for your shrine the good temple at Itaimarutu where,  
for the blessing of the world, scholars praise you with the *Vedic*  
chant, and great seers and Gods gather to bathe on the day of the  
Pusam festival in the month of Tai *Tirumurai*

Folk from far and near, good men and rogues and those  
who pray every day for an end to disease—our Lord of Arur  
is kinsman to all those who cry, “O my jewel, golden one,  
dear husband! My son!” Such is the splendor of Ārdrā day in  
Arur town! *Tirumurai*

As the blare of the moon-white conch, the *paraī* drum’s beat and  
the jingle of the cymbals of dancing devotees spread everywhere,  
peacocks, thinking that the rains have come, dance in delight Such  
is the splendor of Ārdrā day in Arur town! *Tirumurai*

Hail! Śankara, Dispenser of Bliss! Hail! The oldest in Śivaloka!  
Hail! Our youngest youth appearing to extricate us from affliction!  
Hail! Matchless One! Hail! The Lord of *devas*! Hail! *Tirumurai*

By drinking the water after washing the holy feet of the *guru*  
and sprinkling the remains on the head, man attains the fruit  
of bathing in all the sacred waters of all sacred rivers and of  
all pilgrimages *Guru Gītā*

I’ll wreath Him in garland I’ll hug Him to heart I’ll sing Him His  
name and dance with gifts of flowers Singing and dancing, seek  
the Lord This alone I know *Tirumantiram*

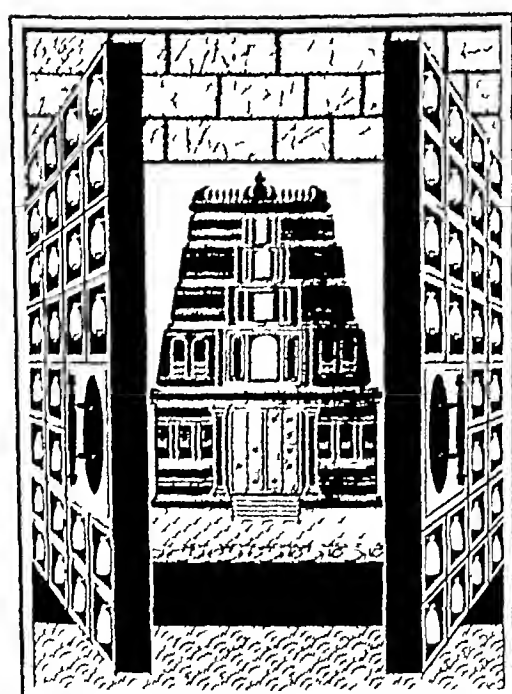
Why think and suffer further for the insubstantial body,  
that is transient as a dew drop on a blade of grass? While on  
this earth, extol with love the holy feet of Him who has  
six faces *Natchintanai*



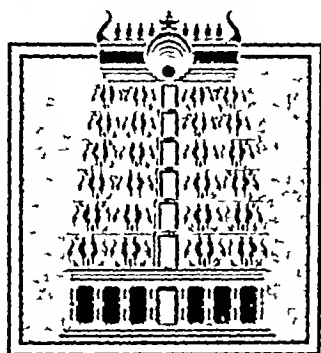
Upāsanā Upanishad  
उपासना उपनिषद्



**Sacred Worship**



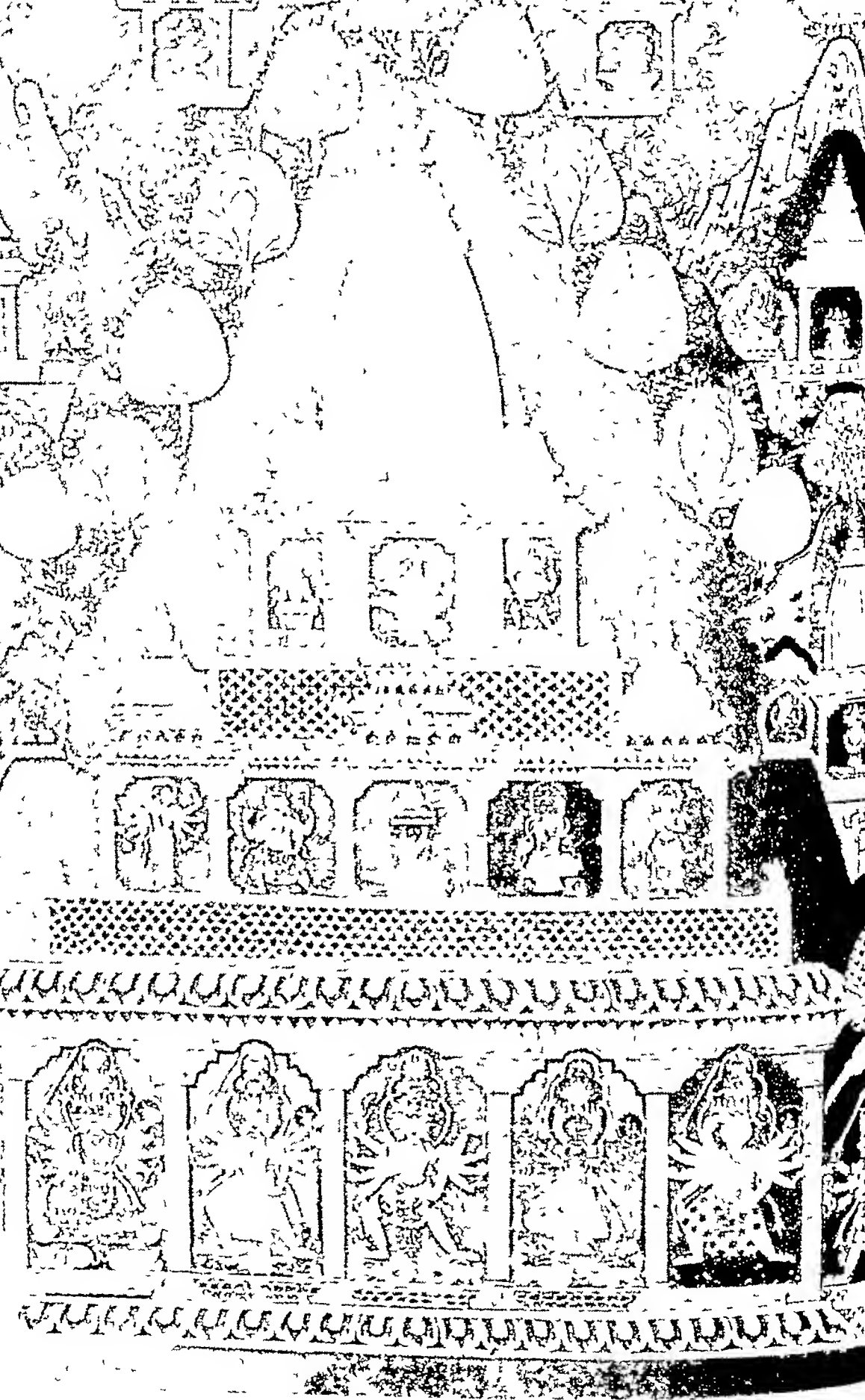
# Śivālaya Maṇḍala शिवालयमण्डल



## Śiva Temples

*Gopuras* are the towering stone gateways through which pilgrims enter the South-Indian temple. Richly ornamented with myriad sculptures of the divine pantheon, their tiers symbolize the several planes of existence. Aum





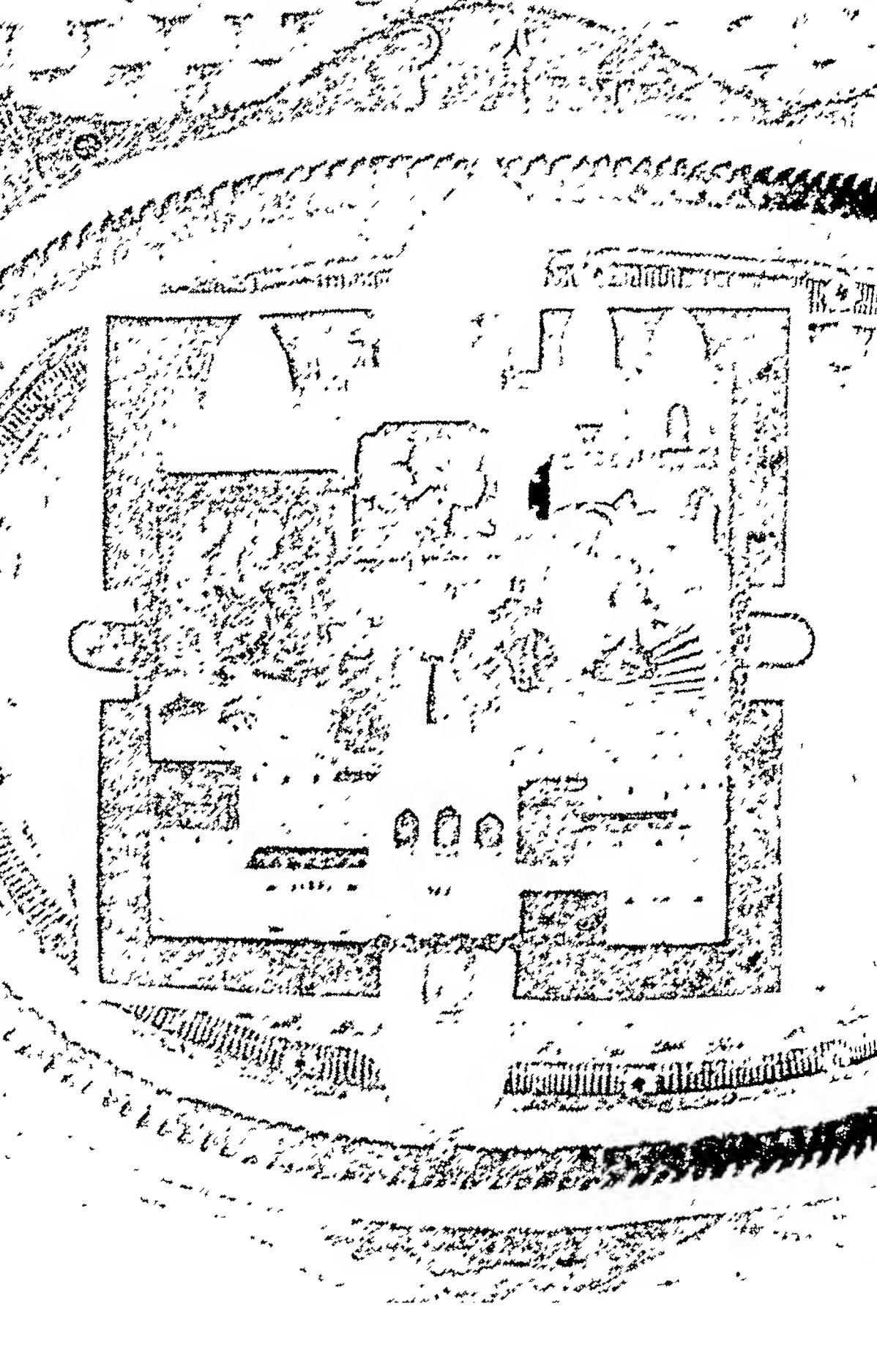
## What Is the Nature of the Śiva Temple?

### ŚLOKA 101

The Śiva temple is the abode of God Śiva and Gods and the precinct in which the three worlds consciously commune. It is specially sanctified, possessing a ray of spiritual energy connecting it to the celestial worlds. Aum

### BHĀSHYA

The three pillars of Śaivism are the temples, the scriptures and the *satgurus*. These we revere, for they sustain and preserve the ancient wisdom. Śiva temples, whether they be small village sanctuaries or towering citadels, are esteemed as God's home and consecrated abode. In the Śiva temple we draw close to God Śiva and find a refuge from the world. His grace, permeating everywhere, is most easily known within the precincts of the Śiva temple. It is in the purified milieu of the temple that the three worlds commune most perfectly, that devotees can establish harmony with inner-plane spiritual beings. When the spiritual energy, *śakti*, invoked by the *pūjā* permeates the sanctum sanctorum and floods out to the world, Śaivites know they are in a most holy place where God and the Gods commune with them. Within most Śiva temples are private rooms, sanctums, for Lord Ganeśa and Lord Kārttikeya, and shrines for the many Gods and saints. The *Vedas* explain, "Even as the radiance of the sun enlightens all regions, above, below, and slantwise, so that only God, glorious and worthy of worship, rules over all His creation." Aum Namah Śivāya



## How Are Temples Founded and Built?

### ŚLOKA 102

Śiva temples are founded by God Himself, often designated in a vision or dream of a devout Śaivite, then erected by temple craftsmen usually following Āgamic law. In such a holy place, holiness itself can reside. Aum

### BHĀSHYA

Because of its holiness, a Śiva temple is most often and properly established by God Śiva through His devotees and not founded by men. Once the site is known, hereditary temple architects, known as *sthapati*s, are commissioned to design and construct the temple. By tradition, every stone is set in place according to the sacred architecture found in the Āgamic scriptures. When properly consecrated, the temple becomes a place upon the earth in which the three worlds can communicate for the upliftment of mankind and the fulfillment of Śiva's *dharmic* law. Śiva has deliberately established many temples to communicate His love to His children throughout the world, who live in every country of the world and long for their Lord's ever-present love. They build temples in His name and install His image, chant His praises and thus invoke His presence. Lord Śiva accepts all these temples as His own and sends a divine ray to vivify and vitalize them. Śiva's *Vedas* announce, "Brahman is the priest, Brahman the sacrifice, by Brahman the posts are erected. From Brahman the officiating priest was born, in Brahman is concealed the oblation." Aum Namah Śivāya



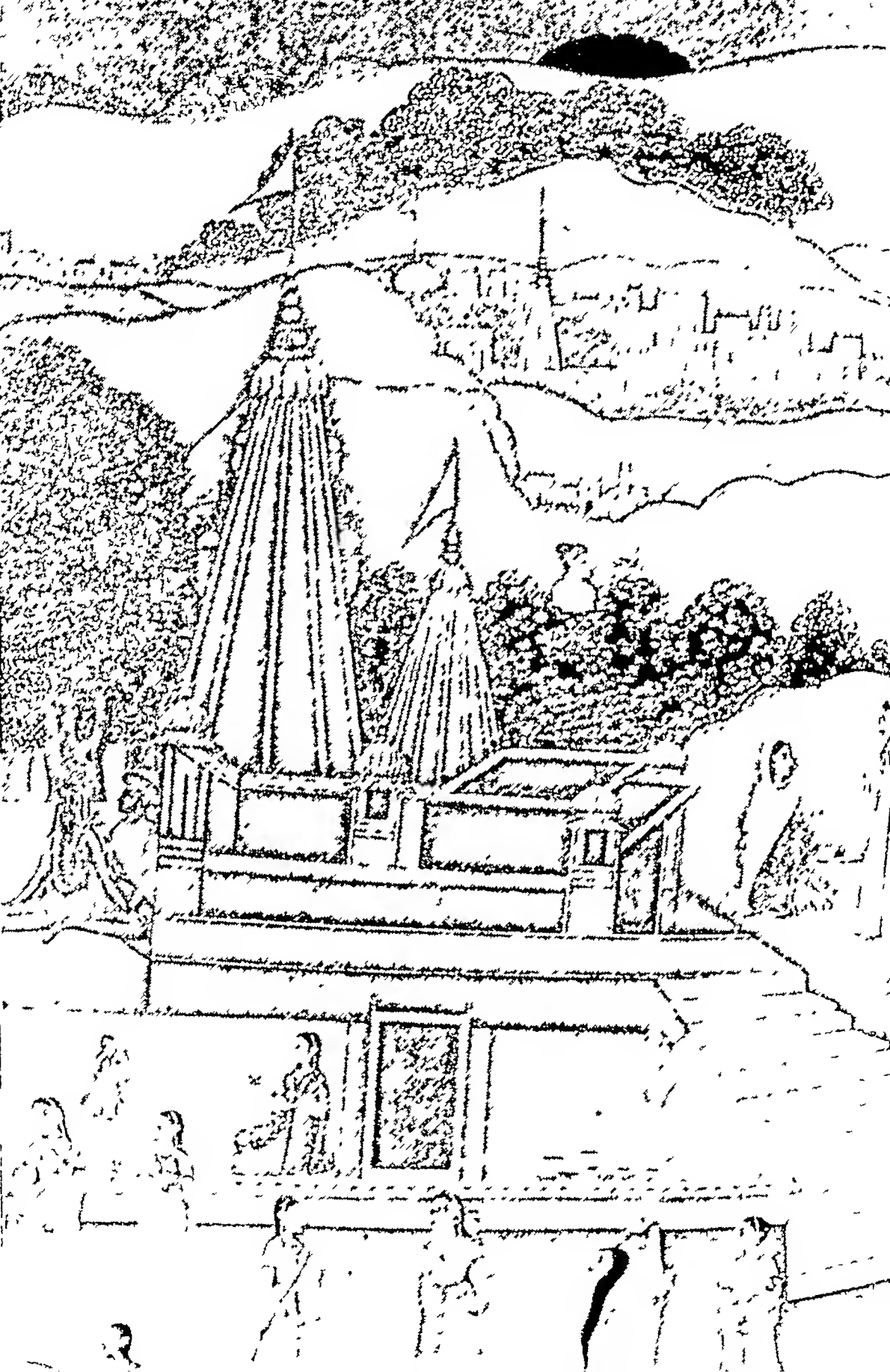
## When Should One Attend the Temple?

### ŚLOKA 103

We attend the temple to commune with God Śiva, Kārtikeya or Ganeśa at least once each week and additionally on auspicious days of the month, yearly festival days and on the holiest day of the year, Mahāśivarātri Aum.

### BHĀSHYA

Śaivites consider it most important to live near a Śiva temple, and we build one wherever we find ourselves in the world. This is a most meritorious act, earning blessings in this life and the next. Religious life centers around the temple. It is here in God's home that we nurture our relationship with the Divine. Not wanting to stay away too long, we visit the temple weekly, though women never go during their monthly period. We strive to attend each major festival, when the *śakti* of the Deity is most powerful, and pilgrimage to a far-off temple annually. Devout Śiva *bhaktas* attend daily *pūjā* in the temple. All Śaivites visit the temple on Śiva's most sacred day of the year, Mahāśivarātri. Śaivite temples are the most ancient of all. Being the homes of the Gods and God, they are approached with great reverence and humility. Draw near the temple as you would approach a king, a governor, a president of a great realm, anticipating with a little trepidation your audience with him. The *Vedas* say, "May the Lord find pleasure in our song of praise! Priest among men, may he offer due homage to the heavenly beings! Great, O Lord, is your renown" Aum Namah Śivāya



## How Does One Attend a Śiva Temple?

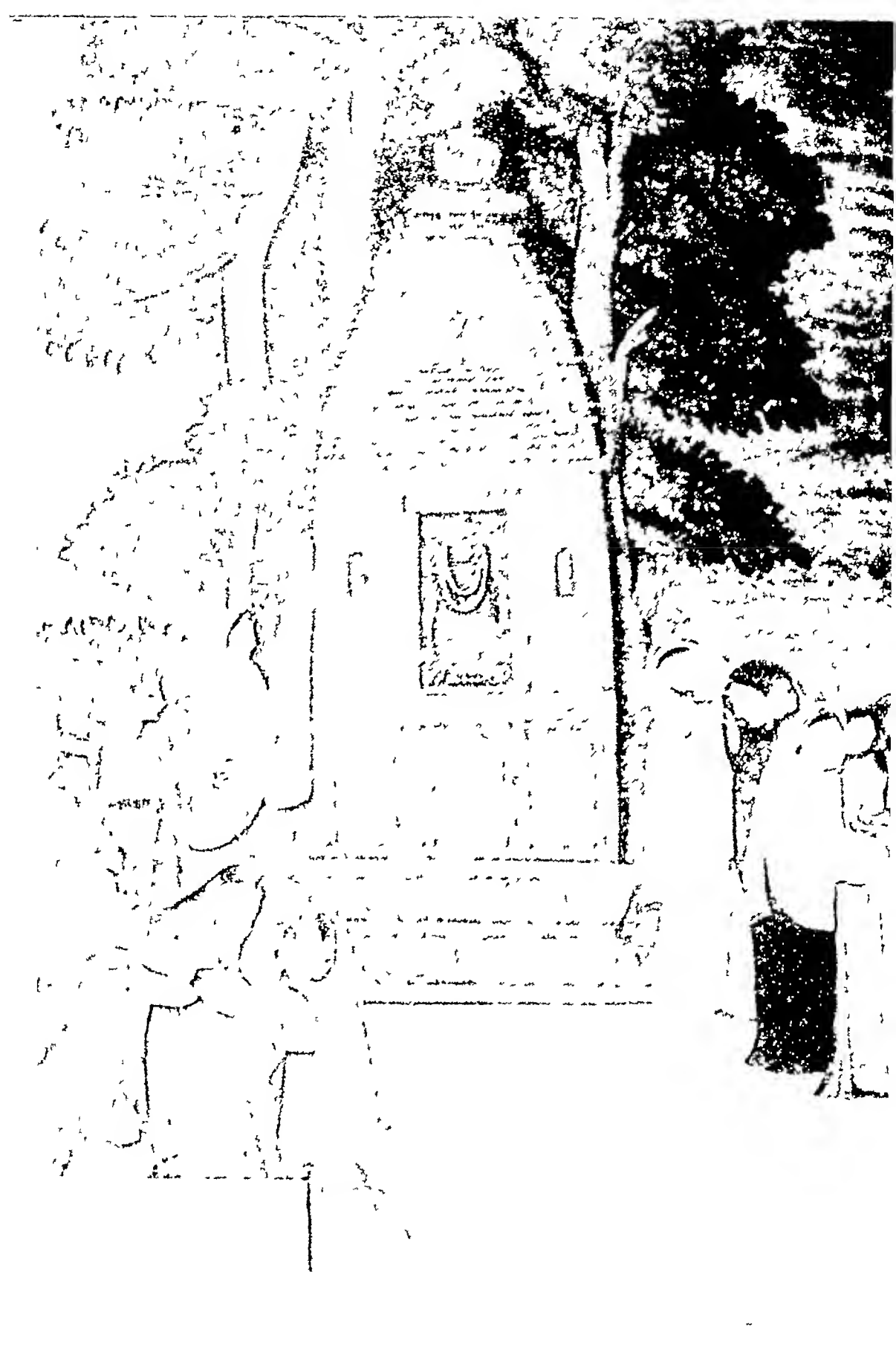
### ŚLOKA 104

Approaching with deep reverence, we begin our worship with Ganeśa, circumambulate the temple and proceed to the main sanctum for *pūjā*. After receiving the sacraments, we sit quietly before taking our leave. Aum

### BHĀSHYA

With offerings in hand, leaving our shoes outside, we enter through the *gopura*, or temple tower, wash hands, feet and mouth, and seek blessings at Lord Ganeśa's shrine. Next we follow the outer *prakara*, or hallway, clockwise around the *mahāmandapa*, central chambers. Inside we leave our worldly thoughts at the *balipītha*, or offering place, then prostrate before the *dhvajastambha*, temple flagpole, and worship Nandi, the sacred bull. Next we circumambulate the central sanctum, *garbhagriha*, usually three times, returning to its entrance for worship. During *pūjā*, we stand with hands folded or in *añjali mudrā*, though according to temple custom, it may be proper to sit quietly or sing devotional hymns. After the *ārati*, or waving of the camphor light before the Deity, we prostrate (*ashtāṅga pranāma* for men, and *pañchāṅga pranāma* for women) and rise to receive the *prasāda*, accepting them in the right hand. We walk around the *garbhagriha* one final time before taking our leave. The *Vedas* affirm, "If a man first takes firm hold on faith and then offers his sacrifice, then in that man's sacrifice both Gods and men place confidence." Aum Namah Śivāya.





## What Occurs Within the Śiva Temple?

### ŚLOKA 105

Activities within a Śiva temple vary from the daily round of *pūjās* to the elaborate celebrations on annual festival days. Even amid large crowds, our worship is personal and individual, not congregational. Aum Namah Śivāya.

### BHĀSHYA

Besides the daily round of *pūjās*, many other events take place within the temple: pilgrims offering vows, priests chanting the *Vedas*, processions, elephants giving blessings, garlands being woven, weddings or philosophical discourses in pillared halls, devotional singing, feedings for the impoverished, dance and cultural performances, ritual bath in the stone tank, meditation, religious instruction, and many festival-related events. Generally, there are seven times when *pūjās* are held: at five, six and nine in the morning, at noon, and at six, eight and ten in the evening. The outer worship is approaching God properly, presenting ourselves acceptably. It is to offer our love, our adoration and then to speak out our prayer, our petition. The inner worship is to enjoy God's presence and not rush away, to stay, to sit, to meditate awhile and bask in the *śakti*, endeavoring to realize the Self within. The *Vedas* say, "'Come, come!' these radiant offerings invite the worshiper, conveying him thither on the rays of the sun, addressing him pleasantly with words of praise, 'This world of Brahman is yours in its purity, gained by your own good works'" Aum Namah Śivāya.

## Scriptures Speak on Śiva Temples

You who are worthy of men's prayers, our leader, our God, rich in heroes—may we install you glowing and glistening! Shine forth at night and at morn! Your favor has kindled our hearths! By your favor we shall be great!

*R̥g Veda*

Of lords the Lord Supreme, of kings the King, of Gods the God, Him let us worship—transcendent, Lord of all worlds and wholly worthy of worship

*Yajur Veda*

A man comes to Thee in fearful wonder and says “Thou art God who never was born Let thy face, Rudra, shine upon me, and let thy love be my eternal protection”

*Yajur Veda*

For the purpose of protection of all, a Linga is variously caused to be built in villages by Gods, by seers and by ordinary men

*Kāraṇa Āgama*

Cutting all the stones to be cut, carving all the stones to be carved, boring all the stones to be bored, such are the three aspects of the *śilpi*'s art The architect and the *sūtragrāhin* build the temples and craft the images, but it is with the *takṣaka* that the architect effects the opening of the eyes of these images, and similar rites

*Suprabheda Āgama*

Having worshiped Nandi in the Southeast—two-eyed, two-armed, black in color, having the formidable three-pointed trident of Śiva, with a crest and twisted locks of hair—in the Southwest, he should especially worship Mahākāla, black in color, two-eyed, two-armed, with white garment, two-legged, having an awesome form, equipped with a noose and a tusk, and endowed with all ornaments

*Kāraṇa Āgama*

He should repeat the Śiva *mantra* according to his ability, and  
(there should be) circumambulation, obeisance and surrender of  
the self

*Kāraṇa Āgama*

I bow before that Sadāśivaliṅga which is worshiped by  
the multitude of Gods with genuine thoughts, full of  
faith and devotion, and whose splendor is like that of a  
million suns

*Īṅgāśhtakam*

The Pati is the blessed Śivaliṅga The *paśu* is the mighty bull  
standing in front The *pāśa* is the altar Thus, in the temple, the  
Lord stands for those who, searching, see

*Tirumanṭiram*

When in Śiva's temple, worship ceases, harm befalls the ruler,  
scanty are the rains, theft and robbery abound in the land Thus  
did my holy Nandinātha declare

*Tirumanṭiram*

Of what use is the body that never walked around the temple of  
Śiva, offering Him flowers in the worship rite? Of what use is  
this body?

*Tirumurai*

The unholy town where no temple stands, the town where men do  
not wear the holy ash, the town which does not resound with  
sacred song, the town which is not resplendent with many shrines,  
the town where the white conch is not reverently blown, the town  
where festive canopies and white flags are not seen, the town where  
devotees do not gather flowers for the worship rite, that town is no  
town It is a mere wilderness

*Tirumurai*

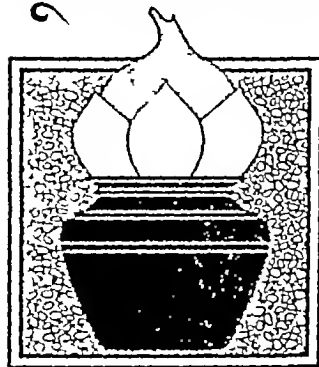
He approached and entered the temple where the Lord who  
has the golden mountain for His bow dwells in delight. He  
circumambulated it, prostrated himself at the sacred courtyard,  
entered the presence of the three-eyed God, the bull-rider crowned  
with matted, red hair

*Periyapurāṇam*



Pūjā Maṇḍala

पूजामण्डल



## Temple Rites

*Kalaśa*, a husked coconut circled by five mango leaves on a pot, is used in *pūjā* to represent any God, especially Lord Ganeśa. Breaking a coconut before His shrine is the ego's shattering to reveal the sweet fruit inside. Aum



## What Is the Inner Importance of Pūjā?

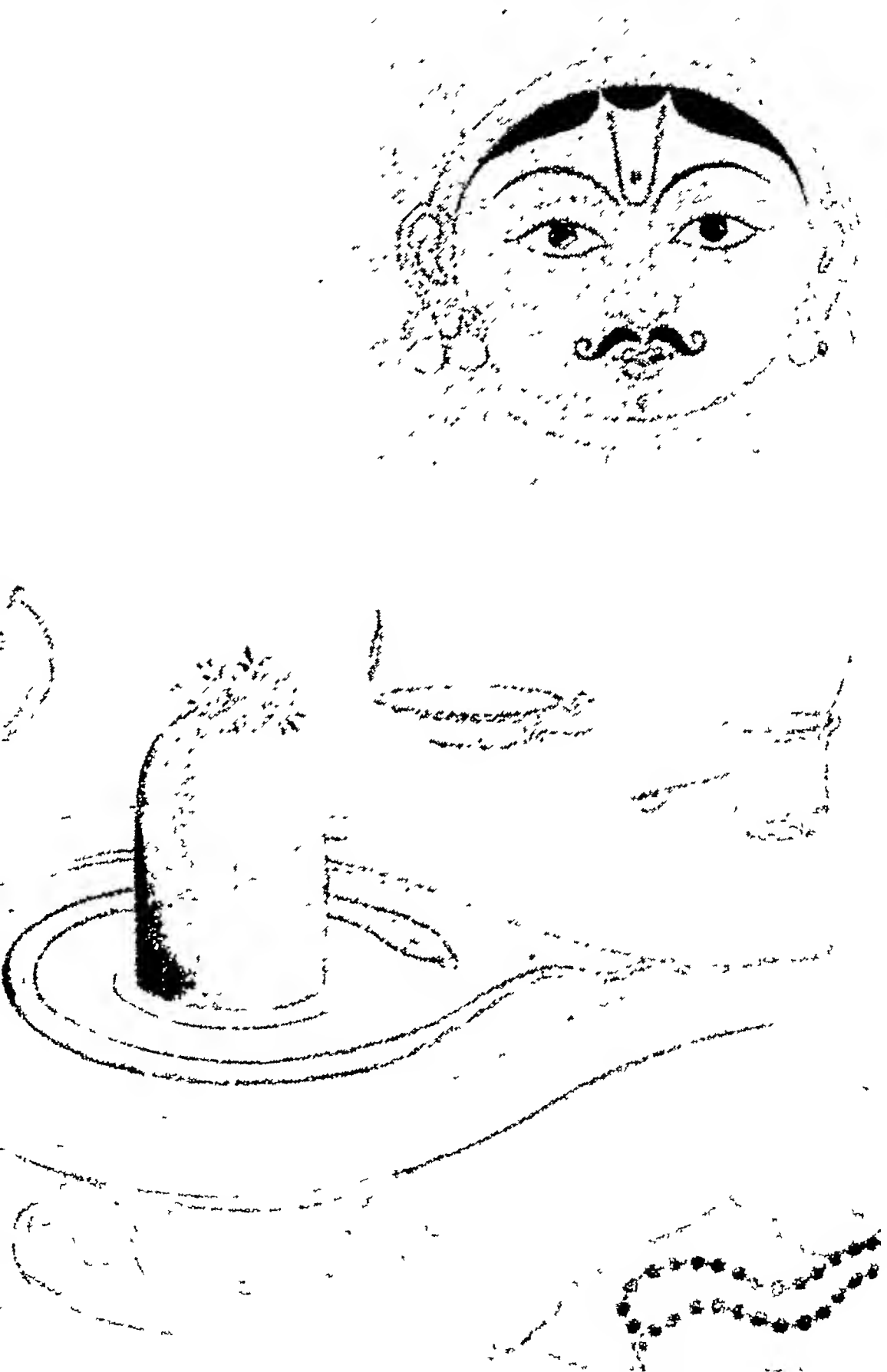
### ŚLOKA 106

The traditional rite of worship, called *pūjā*, is a sanctified act of the highest importance for the Hindu. It is the invoking of God Śiva and the Gods and the heartfelt expression of our love, devotion and surrender. Aum.

### BHĀSHYA

*Pūjā* is a ceremony in which the ringing of bells, passing of flames, presenting of offerings and chanting invoke the *devas* and Mahādevas, who then come to bless and help us. *Pūjā* is our holy communion, full of wonder and tender affections. It is that part of our day which we share most closely and consciously with our beloved Deity, and thus it is for Śaivites the axis of religious life. Our worship through *pūjā*, outlined in the *Śaiva Āgamas*, may be an expression of festive celebration of important events in life, of adoration and thanksgiving, penance and confession, prayerful supplication and requests, or contemplation at the deepest levels of superconsciousness. *Pūjā* may be conducted on highly auspicious days in a most elaborate, orthodox and strict manner by the temple *pūjārīs*, or it may be offered in the simplest form each morning and evening in the home shrine by any devotee. The *Vedas* proclaim, "Sacrifice resembles a loom with threads extended this way and that, composed of innumerable rituals. Behold now the fathers weaving the fabric, seated on the outstretched loom 'Lengthwise! Crosswise!' they cry" Aum Namah Śivāya





## What Is the Special Rite Called Archana?

### ŚLOKA 107

*Archana* is an abbreviated form of temple *pūjā* in which the name, birth star and spiritual lineage of a devotee are intoned to the God by the priest to invoke special, individual, family or group blessings and assistance. Aum

### BHĀSHYA

If we wish to receive the Deity's blessing for something special that is happening in our life, we may request an *archana*. This is arranged and paid for within the temple itself. We give a basket or tray to the priest, or *pujārī*, upon which have been placed certain articles to be offered to the Deity: usually a flower garland, bananas and a coconut (carefully washed and not even breathed upon), holy ash, incense, camphor, rosewater and a contribution for the *pujārī*. The *pujārī* asks for our name, which we tell him aloud, and our *nakshatra*, or birth star. Then he asks for our *gotra*—the name of the *rishi* with which our family is associated. He then intones these, our credentials, before the Deity along with a Sanskrit verse. A brief *pūjā*, in which the 108 names of the God are chanted, is then performed specifically on our behalf and special blessings received. At the end, the *pujārī* will return most of the offerings as *prasāda*. The *Vedas* implore, "By your favors granted enable us, O Lord, once again to leap over the pitfalls that face us. Be a high tower, powerful and broad, for both us and our children. To our people bring well-being and peace." Aum Namah Śivāya.



## What is the Nature of Image Worship?

### ŚLOKA 108

We worship God Śiva and the Gods who by their infinite powers spiritually hover over and indwell the image, or *mūrti*, which we revere as their temporary body. We commune with them through the ritual act of *pūjā*. Aum

### BHĀSHYA

The stone or metal Deity images are not mere symbols of the Gods; they are the form through which their love, power and blessings flood forth into this world. We may liken this mystery to our ability to communicate with others through the telephone. We do not talk to the telephone; rather we use a telephone as a means of communication with another person who is perhaps thousands of miles away. Without the telephone, we could not converse across such distances, and without the sanctified *mūrti* in the temple or shrine we cannot easily commune with the Deity. His vibration and presence can be felt in the image, and He can use the image as a temporary physical-plane body or channel. As we progress in our worship, we begin to adore the image as the Deity's physical body, for we know that He is actually present and conscious in it during *pūjā*, aware of our thoughts and feelings and even sensing the *pūjārī*'s gentle touch on the metal or stone. The *Vedas* exclaim, "Come down to us, Rudra, who art in the high mountains. Come and let the light of thy face, free from fear and evil, shine upon us. Come to us with thy love." Aum Namah Śivāya



## Who Are the Priests of Śiva Temples?

### ŚLOKA 109

Ādiśaiva priests are the hereditary *pujārīs*, who care for the temple and conduct its varied rites and rituals as humble servants of God. They are trained in the complex arts of worship, generally from a young age. Aum.

### BHĀSHYA

Every temple has its own staff of priests. Some temples appoint only one, while others have a large extended family of priests to take care of the many shrines and elaborate festivals. Most are well trained from early childhood in the intricate liturgy. Śiva temple *pujārīs* are usually *brāhmins* from the Ādiśaiva lineage, though in certain temples they are not. These men of God must be fully knowledgeable of the metaphysical and ontological tenets of the religion and learn hundreds of *mantras* and chants required in the ritual worship. When fully trained, they are duly ordained as Śivāchāryas to perform *parārtha pūjā* in a consecrated Śiva temple. Generally, *pujārīs* do not attend to the personal problems of devotees. They are God's servants, tending His temple home and its related duties, never standing between the devotee and God. Officiating priests are almost always married men, while their assistants may be *brahmachārīs* or widowers. The *Āgamas* explain, "Only a well-qualified priest may perform both *ātmārtha pūjā*, worship for one's self, and *parārtha pūjā*, worship for others. Such an Ādiśaiva is a Śaiva *brāhmin* and a teacher." Aum Namah Śivāya



## What Does the Pujārī Do During Pūjā?

### ŚLOKA 110

During the *pūjā*, through *mantras*, *mudrās* and mystical ritual, the priest invokes the Deity. All observances are precisely detailed in the *Āgamas*, every act, every intoned syllable is rich in esoteric meaning. Aum Namah Śivāya

### BHĀSHYA

The *pujārī* performs strict ablutions and disciplines to prepare himself for his sacred duty. Before the *pūjā*, he ritually purifies the atmosphere. As the *pūjā* begins, he meditates on Lord Ganeśa, praying that all obstacles may be removed. He then beseeches the God to indwell the image, to accept the prayers of the votaries, and to shower blessings and love on all. Calling the name of the Deity and chanting *mantras* and hymns from the *Vedas* and *Āgamas*, the *pujārī* makes offerings of unbroken rice, burning camphor, incense, holy ash, water, red turmeric powder, flowers and food. Sometimes offerings of milk, rosewater, sandalwood paste and yogurt are poured over the *mūrti* as an oblation, called *abhisheka*. Bells are loudly rung, conch shells sounded, and musicians may play the temple drums and woodwinds. The *pujārī* treats the Deity with utmost care, attending to Him as the King of kings. When the *pūjā* has ended, the *pujārī* passes the now sanctified offerings to those present. The *Vedas* state, "Daily the sacrifice is spread. Daily the sacrifice is completed. Daily it unites the worshiper to heaven. Daily by sacrifice to heaven he ascends." Aum Namah Śivāya



## Scriptures Speak on Temple Rites

The devout performers of solemn ceremonies, aspiring for chariots, as if, are led to the doors of the chamber of the Lord. Ladles, placed to the East, are plying the fire with melted butter at the fire sacrifice, as the mother cow licks her calf

*Rīg Veda*

As hungry children here below sit round about their mother, even so all beings expectantly sit round the *agnihotra*

*Sāma Veda*

May the forefathers of ancient days protect me in this my prayer, in this my act, in this my priestly duty, in this my performance, in this my thought, in this my purpose and desire, in this my calling on the Gods! All Hail!

*Atharva Veda*

A Linga sprung up by itself and an image in the shape of a God are said to be intended for worship for the purpose of others. The merit to the worshiper of worship for all others is the same as the merit of worship for oneself

*Kāraṇa Āgama*

Offerings of perfumed substances, flowers, incense, lamps and fresh fruits—these are the five elements of the traditional *pūjā* which culminates with the offering of the lamps

*Kāmika Āgama*

The worship rites from the very beginning, worship of the Linga and its support, must be done by an Ādiśaiva in the manner described in the *Āgamas*

*Kāraṇa Āgama*

As fire in a basin flames by means of air, thus Lord Śiva is born, is made manifest before the eyes of the devotee, by *mantra*, in the Linga

*Kāraṇa Āgama*

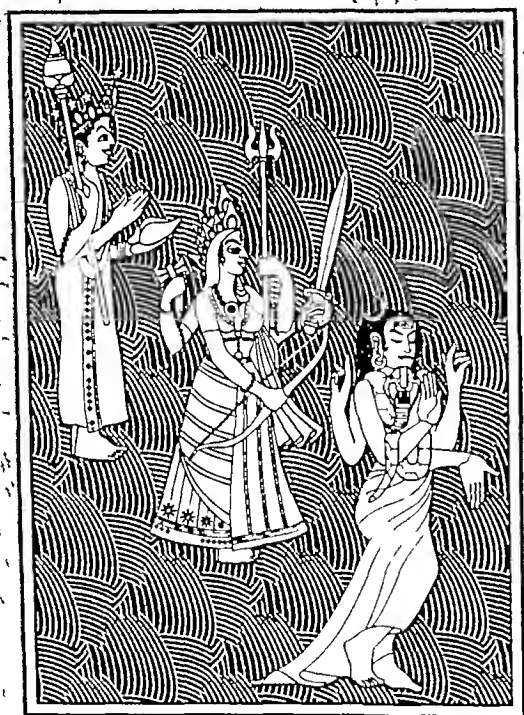
The twice-born *gurukal* should twice place the triple sectarian marks of ash mixed with water. Having scattered all sins by this twofold protection of his body, the Gurukkal should now be competent to perform all the sacrificial rites *Kāraṇa Āgama*

In the beginning of worship, at the conclusion of the rite, in the offering of water, in the anointing of the image, in the bathing of the image, in the offering of light, in the sprinkling of the image with sandal, in the bathing of the image with consecrated liquids, in the offering of incense, in the act of worship, and in all other things to be done, the Śivāchārya should strike the great bell *Kāraṇa Āgama*

He should bathe the Linga, repeating the Vyoma-Vyāpī Mantra, and with sesame oil, and with curd, milk and *ghee*, with coconut water, with honey, repeating the Pañchabrahman, he should carefully rub the Linga with fine rice-flour paste, repeating the Hṛdayā Mantra *Kāraṇa Āgama*

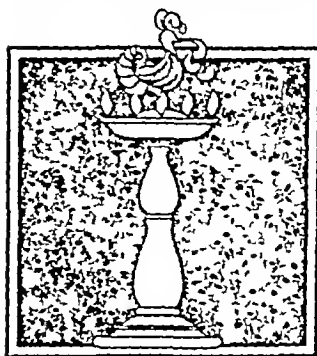
First there is the invocation, second, the establishing of the God, third, water for washing the feet should be offered, fourth, water for sipping, fifth, the placing of *ārghya*, water, sixth, sprinkling water as ablution, seventh, garment and sandal, eighth, worship with flowers, ninth, incense and light should be offered, tenth, offering of food, eleventh, oblation should be performed, twelfth, the holy fire, an oblation of clarified butter, thirteenth, an oblation, fourteenth, song and music, fifteenth, dancing, and sixteenth, the act of leaving *Kāraṇa Āgama*

Seers can reach Him because He is visible, worshipers, too, can see Him. But if they possess love for Him, Hara, who is the first cause of the ancient universe, will manifest Himself to their mind as light *Tīrumurai*



Bhakti Maṇḍala

भक्तिमण्डल



Love of God

*Kuttuvilaku*, the standing oil lamp, symbolizes the dispelling of ignorance and awakening of the divine light within us. Its soft glow illumines the temple or shrine room, keeping the atmosphere pure and serene. Aum



# Is Temple Worship Only for Beginners?

## ŚLOKA 111

Temple worship is for all men and women at every level of spiritual development. Its meaning and experience deepen as we unfold spiritually through the stages of service, devotion, *yoga* and enlightened wisdom. Aum

## BHĀSHYA

We never outgrow temple worship. It simply becomes more profound and meaningful as we progress through four spiritual levels. In the *charyā pāda*, the stage of selfless service, we attend the temple because we have to, because it is expected of us. In the *kriyā pāda*, the stage of worshipful *sādhana*s, we attend because we want to, our love of God is the motivation. In the *yoga pāda*, we worship God internally, in the sanctum of the heart, yet even the *yogī* immersed in the superconscious depths of mind has not outgrown the temple. It is there—God's home on the earth plane—when the *yogī* returns to normal consciousness. So perfect is the temple worship of those who have traversed the *jñāna pāda* that they themselves become worship's object—living, moving temples. Yea, temple worship is never outgrown. The *Vedas* give praise, "Homage to Him who presides over all things, that which was and that which shall be, to whom alone belongs the heaven, to that all-powerful Brahman be homage! From Fullness He pours forth the full, the full spreads, merging with the full. We eagerly would know from whence He thus replenishes Himself" Aum Namah Śivāya



## How Do Devotees Prepare for Worship?

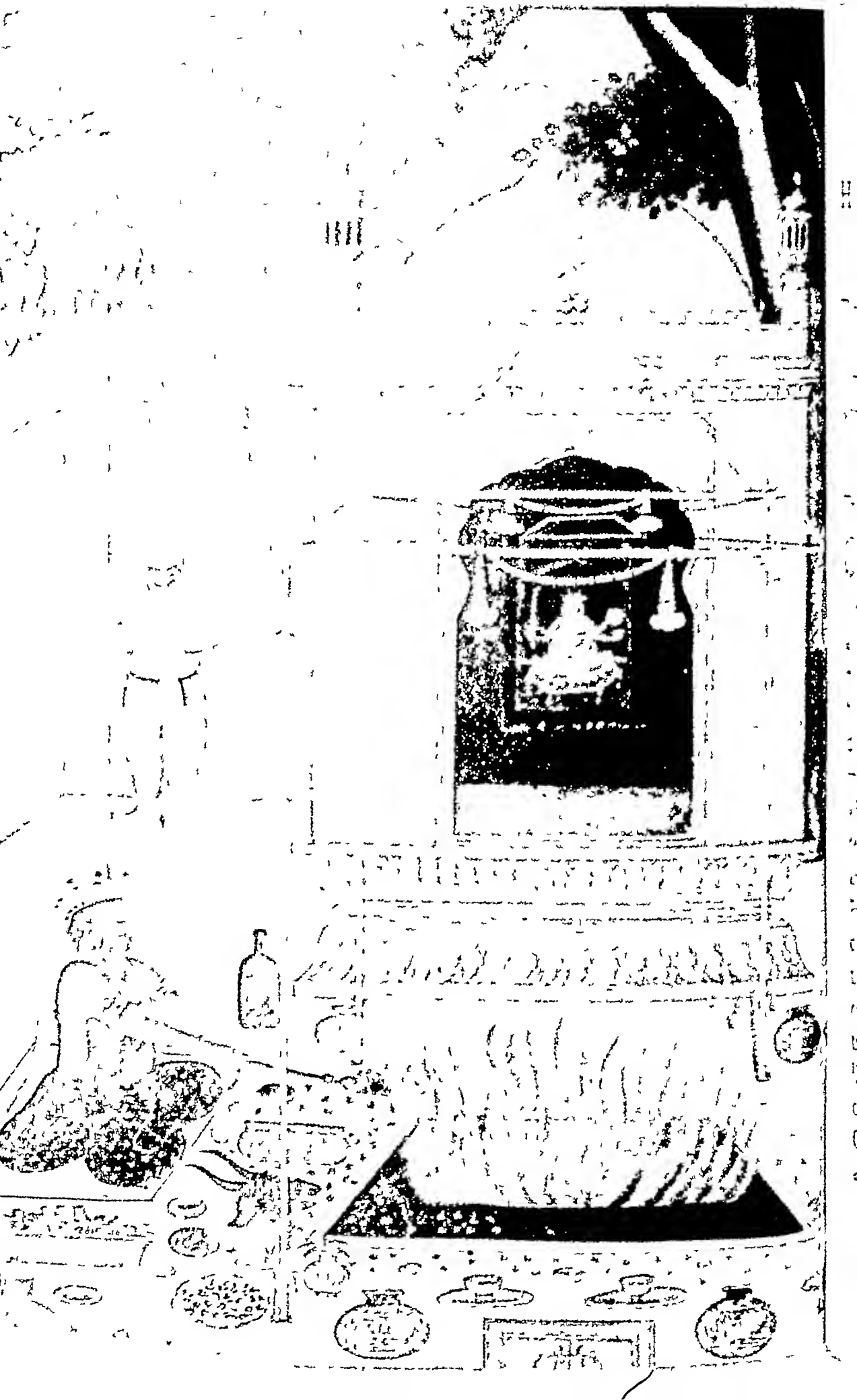
### ŚLOKA 112

We visit a Śiva temple after bathing, dressing in clean clothes and preparing an offering, which can be as simple as a few flowers or fruits. We bring the mind to the holy feet of the Deity even as preparations begin Aum

### BHĀSHYA

Visiting the home of God Śiva or of a God, the temple, is not without its trepidation, protocol and proper conduct, preceded by preparation that we administrate ourselves. Our worship is only as meaningful and effective as we make it. Before we attend or conduct a *pūjā*, we should carefully bathe the body, rinse the mouth and dress in fresh clothing—*sārīs* for women and *dhotīs* or *veshtīs* and shawls for men where this is the custom. Throughout these preparations we may sing hymns or chant *mantras* or God's holy names silently or aloud, taking care to keep the mind free from worldly matters. We then gather offerings for the Deity. If mealtime is near, we eat only after *pūjā* has been concluded. Although the outer details of our worship are important, it is our inner feelings and thoughts, our love and devotion, which are the truest offering we can make. The *Vedas* testify, "The Gods, led by the spirit, honor faith in their worship. Faith is composed of the heart's intention. Light comes through faith. Through faith men come to prayer, faith in the morning, faith at noon and at the setting of the sun. O faith, give us faith!" Aum Namah Śivāya





## How Do Our Prayers Reach the Gods?

### ŚLOKA 113

Through temple worship, the three worlds become open to one another, and the beings within them are able to communicate. By means of the mystical arts of *pūjā*, the worlds act in concert, and prayers are received. Aum.

### BHĀSHYA

The three worlds are connected when *pūjā* is performed and worship is begun. There are certain rites that can be performed to enable individuals to communicate directly with beings in the inner worlds. Prayers are given and received in many ways. Among the most intimate, personal forms of communication is the written prayer to the *devas* or to God. Burned in Agni's sacred fire, it disintegrates in the physical world and quickly re-forms in the astral world. When a prayer is burned in a temple wherein this practice is consecrated, its astral image is received and read by the *devas*, and properly dispatched and answered, within the confines of our *karmic* pattern. Prayers may also be conveyed by slowly, mentally enunciating the words, visualizing them rising up the spine, through the top of the head, reaching beyond to the feet of God. The *devas* will not intervene unless asked. This is the inner law. The *Vedas* avow, "He shines forth at dawn like the sunlight, deploying the sacrifice in the manner of priests unfolding their prayerful thoughts. Agni, the God who knows well all the generations, visits the Gods as a messenger, most efficacious." Aum Namah Śivāya



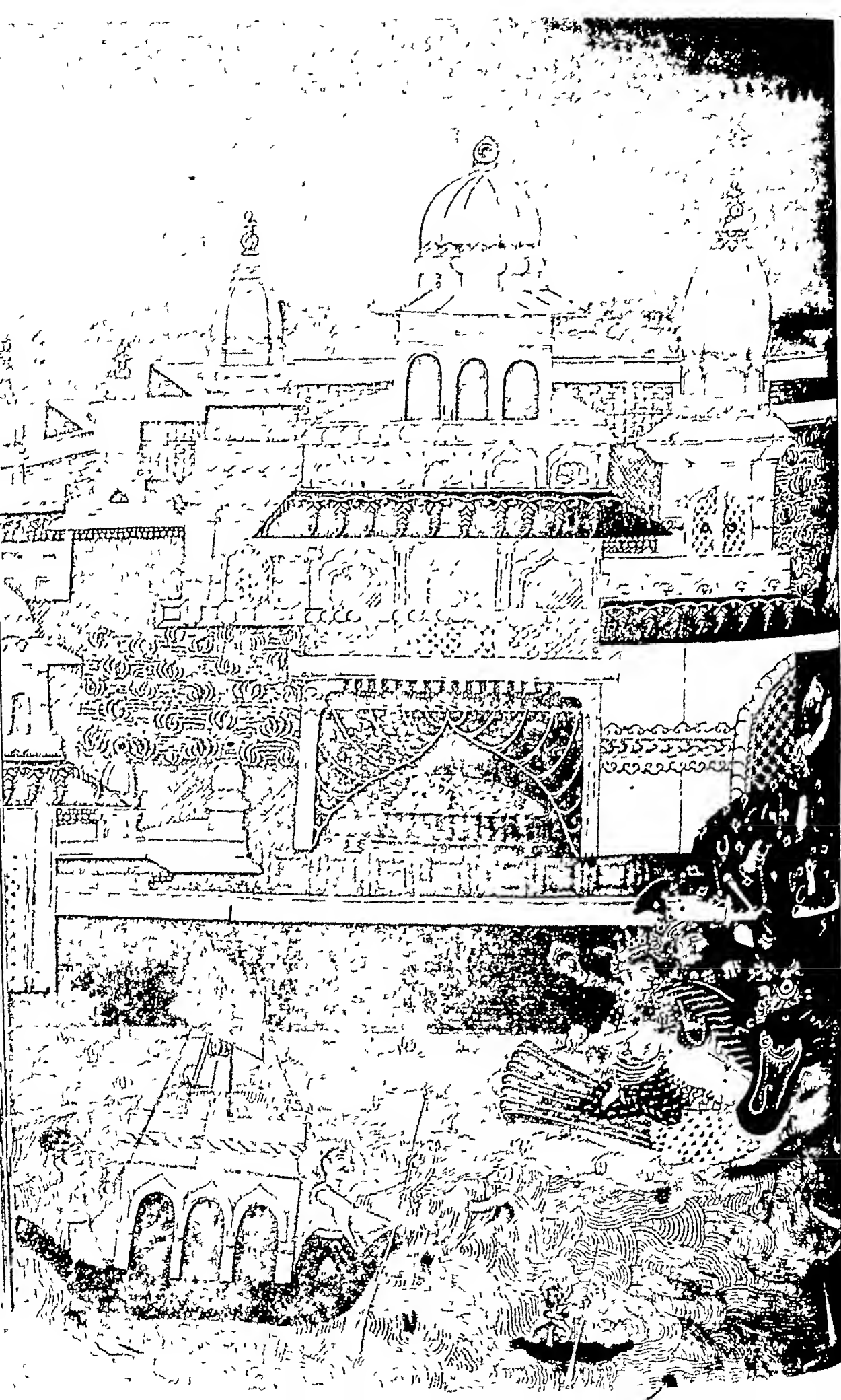
## Do Śaivites Worship Only in Temples?

### ŚLOKA 114

One can worship God anywhere and be in contact with the inner worlds—in the temple, in the home shrine and in the *yogī*'s contemplation. However, in the holy Śiva temple the three worlds most perfectly commune. Aum

### BHĀSHYA

In the shrine room gather messengers of the Mahādeva being worshiped to hear the prayers of the devotee and carry them to their Master. The Gods can be worshiped anywhere when the proper *sankalpa*, preparation, has been performed. God's presence is everywhere, through everything, in everything, for Śiva is the creator of all things, the manifestor of time, form and the space between forms. Śiva is worshiped in the mind, in the heart, through the throat, in the head of the *yogī* locked in *yoga*. So great is the power of worship, communion and communication with the centillion *devas*, that when a little bell is rung, a flame appears in the lamp, the vermilion spot is placed, the flower appears and is offered, God Śiva and the Gods are invoked. Contemplating the aftermath of *pūjā* or *abhisheka*, we feel the *sānnidhya* or divine presence of Parāśakti, tender motherly love, permeating to the outer walls around the temple. The *Vedas* proclaim, "Assemble all, with prayer to the Lord of Heaven, He is the One, the all-pervading, the guest of men. He, the ancient of days, abides in the present. Him, the One, the many follow on their path." Aum Namah Śivāya.



## What Is the Home Shrine's Significance?

### ŚLOKA 115

Every Śaivite maintains a home shrine. It is the most beautiful room in the house, an extension of the temple, the abode for Deities and *devas*, and a holy refuge for daily worship and meditation Aum Namah Śivāya

### BHĀSHYA

Every Śaivite home centers around the home shrine, a special room set aside and maintained to create a temple-like atmosphere in which we conduct *pūjā*, read scripture, perform *sādhana*, meditate, sing *bhajana* and do *japa*. Here the presence of the Gods is always felt, and we remember them especially morning and evening and before meals, which we offer to them before we partake. Worship traditionally begins before dawn, with the simple act of dedication for the coming day. After a bath, morning *pūjā* is performed which includes the repetition of the Gāyatrī or other *mantras* and is followed by *sādhana*s given by one's *guru*. The form of home worship, *ātmārtha pūjā*, is simple: the Deities are invoked and offerings are made. After the final *ārati*, or offering of the light, we supplicate them to bestow their grace on us, our family and all devotees. Evening devotionals include a simple *ārati*, *bhajana*, meditation and reading of scripture, which carries one to lofty celestial realms during sleep. The *Āgamas* affirm, "Worship of one's chosen Linga by anyone in their own home for divine protection is called *ātmārtha pūjā*." Aum Namah Śivāya

## Scriptures Speak on Love of God

Yes, may the man who within his home pleases you all his days with songs and with offerings receive a rich reward, be loaded with your gifts! To him be happiness! This is our prayer *Rig Veda*

Aum O terrestrial sphere! O sphere of space! O celestial sphere! Let us contemplate the splendor of the Solar Spirit, the Divine Creator May He guide our minds *Rig Veda, Gāyatrī Mantra*

For you is my offering, to you I will pray, to you who are worthy of homage and worship You, O God, are a spring in the desert for the man who is thirsty for you, O Everliving *Rig Veda*

All that God does shall win our praise We magnify His name with hymns, seeking boons from the Mighty *Rig Veda*

The rites of oblation, O lovers of truth, which the sages divined from the sacred verses, were variously expounded in the threefold *Veda*. Perform them with constant care. This is your path to the world of holy action *Atharva Veda*

Whatever the merit in any sacrifice, austerity, offering, pilgrimage or place, the merit of worship of the Śivalinga equals that merit multiplied by hundreds of thousands *Kāraṇa Āgama*

In the forenoon with a white garment, in midday with a red garment, with a yellow garment in the evening, and with any of them in the night, the worshiper, drawing the God near with the Sadyojāta Mantra, should cause Him to be firmly established by means of the Vāma Mantra and the Aghora Mantrā *Kāraṇa Āgama*

First there should be purification of one's self, secondly, purification of the site, thirdly, there should be the cleansing of the worship materials, fourthly, purification of the Linga, fifthly, purification of the *mantras* should be done Thus there is the five-fold purification

*Kāraṇa Āgama*

Even the incompetent, indeed, should worship, ending with the offering of sacrificial food, ending with light He who daily does this shall obtain progress toward the Auspicious

*Kāraṇa Āgama*

There is no difference between devotion and perfect knowledge A person who is engrossed in devotion enjoys perpetual happiness And perfect knowledge never descends in a vicious person averse to devotion

*Śiva Purāṇa*

They labor hard and gather flowers and carry water pure They adore the Lord in unfailing piety and at His shining Feet lay flowers and stand and pray, and unto the rain-laden clouds forever prosperous shall they be

*Tirumantiram*

It is devotion to God, Śiva *bhakti*, alone that makes a man blessed Everything else is useless Therefore, without break, practice Śivadhyaṇa Do not be afraid of anything Victory will be yours!

*Natchintanaḥ*

He folded his hands in adoration and praised the Lord's feet His deep love melted in a stream, the flood from his eyes gushed out and spread over his body

*Periyapurāṇam*

What has learning profited a man, if it has not lead him to worship the good feet of Him who is pure knowledge itself? They alone dispel the mind's distress who take refuge at the feet of the Incomparable One

*Tirukural*





Mahātma Upanishad

महात्म उपनिषद्

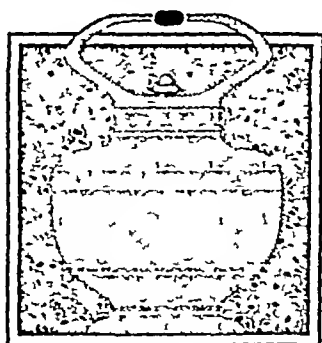


Holy Men and Women



Vairāgya Maṇḍala

वैराग्यमण्डल



## Monastic Life

*Kamandalu*, the water vessel, is carried by the Hindu monastic. It symbolizes his simple, self-contained life, his freedom from worldly needs, his constant *sādhana* and *tapas*, and his oath to seek God everywhere. Aum



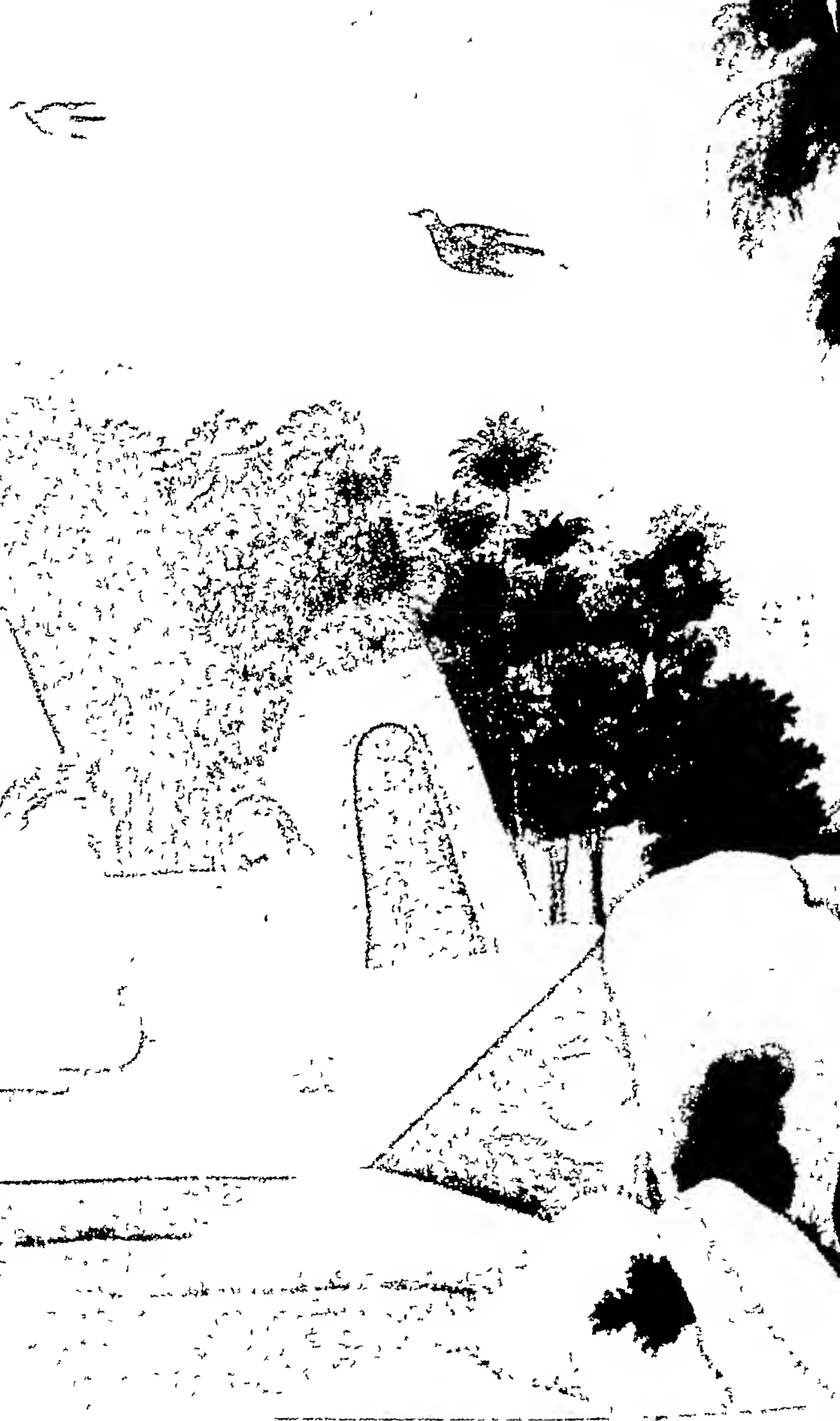
## What Is the Hindu Monastic Tradition?

### ŚLOKA 116

In the Hindu tradition there have always existed among men a few for whom the world held no attraction and *karmas* were on the wane. Some are solitary mendicants. Others reside with their brothers in monasteries. Aum.

### BHĀSHYA

Certain men are by nature inclined toward realization of the Self, and disinclined toward desires of family, wealth and property. Some among them are *sādhus* dressed in white. They are anchorites living in the seclusion of distant caves and remote forests or wandering as homeless mendicants, itinerant pilgrims to the holy sanctuaries of Hinduism. Others dwell as cenobites assembled with fellow monastics, often in the *āśrama*, *aadheenam* or *maṭha* of their *satguru*. These monks, both anchorite and cenobite, may live with no formal vows or take certain simple vows. When initiated into the order of *sannyāsa*, they don the saffron robes and bind themselves to a universal body of Hindu renunciates whose existence has never ceased. Scriptural doctrine states that the two paths, householder and renunciate, are distinct in their *dharma*s and attainments, affirming that true renunciation may not be achieved by those in the world even by virtue of a genuine attitude of detachment. The holy *Vedas* declare, "The man who has found Him becomes a silent monk. Desiring Him alone as their world, ascetics leave their homes and wander about." Aum Namah Śivāya



## What Are the Goals of Renunciate Life?

### ŚLOKA 117

The two fundamental objectives of *sannyāsa* are to promote the spiritual progress of the individual, bringing him into God Realization, and to protect and perpetuate the religion through his illumined leadership. Aum.

### BHĀSHYA

Renunciation and asceticism have been an integral component of Vedic culture from the earliest days, the most highly esteemed path of the Hindu Dharma. Monastic life has both an individual and a universal objective. At the individual level, it is a life of selflessness in which the monastic has made the supreme sacrifice of renouncing all personal ambition, all involvement in worldly matters, that he might direct his consciousness and energies fully toward God Śiva. Guided by the *satguru* along the *sādhana mārگا*, the initiated *sannyāsīn* unfolds through the years into deeper and deeper realizations. Ultimately, if he persists, he comes into direct knowing of Paraśiva, Transcendent Reality. At the universal level, Hindu monasticism fosters the religion by preserving the truths of the Sanātana Dharma. Competent *swāmīs* are the teachers, the theologians, the exemplars of their faith, the torchbearers lighting the way for all. The ancient *Vedas* elucidate, "The ascetic who wears discolored robes, whose head is shaved, who does not possess anything, who is pure and free from hatred, who lives on alms, he becomes absorbed in Brahman" Aum Namah Śivāya





शुद्ध विराजैः ताङ्कनि

## What Is the Sannyāsin's Kuṇḍalinī Path?

### ŚLOKA 118

The *sannyāsin* balances within himself both the male and female energies. Complete unto himself, he is whole and independent. Having attained an equilibrium of *idā* and *pingalā*, he becomes a knower of the known. Aum

### BHĀSHYA

There arises within the *sannyāsin* a pure energy, neither masculine nor feminine. This is the *sushumnā* current coming into power through which he gains control of the *kuṇḍalinī* force and eventually, after years of careful guidance, attains *nirvikalpa samādhi*. Eventually, in one life or another, all will turn to the renunciate path. However, it would be equally improper for a renunciate-minded soul to enter family life as for a householder to seek to be a *sannyāsin*. A word of warning. Be cautious of those who promise great *kuṇḍalinī* awakenings and spiritual rewards from severe practices without preparation, initiation and renunciation. Those entering the serious life of *sannyāsa* must be prepared to follow the traditional path of unrewarded *sādhana* through the years, apart from dear family and friends. Such is the way to reach the truth of *yoga*. It takes many, many years for the soul to thus ripen and mature. The *Tirumantiram* affirms, "Many are the births and deaths forgotten by souls shrouded in ignorance, enveloped in *mala's* darkness. At the moment Great Śiva's grace is gained, the renunciate attains the splendorous light." Aum Namah Śivāya



## What Is the Sannyāsin's Initiation Rite?

### ŚLOKA 119

Young, unmarried men of the Hindu religion may qualify for renunciation, called *sannyāsa dīkshā*, which may be conferred by any legitimate *sannyāsin*. But the most spiritually potent initiation comes from a *satguru*. Aum

### BHĀSHYA

Traditionally, *sannyāsa dīkshā* is restricted to unmarried men, though some modern orders have accepted qualified women. As a rule in most orders, if a candidate enters monastic training before age twenty-five and meets other qualifications, he may, generally after a minimum of twelve years of preparation and training, take the *sannyāsin's* lifetime vows, called holy orders of *sannyāsa*. Only a *sannyāsin* can bring another into the ancient order of *sannyāsa*. However, since the purpose is God Realization, most candidates seek initiation from a spiritually advanced knower of God who can bring them into Paraśiva. *Sannyāsa dīkshā* is given in simple or most formal ways. The formal rites include the shaving of the head, conveyance of certain esoteric teachings, abjuration of the worldly life and *dharma*, administration of monastic vows, conducting of the novitiate's funeral rites and the giving of the *kavi* vestments. The *Vedas* proclaim, "The Self within the body, pure and resplendent, is attained through the cultivation of truth, austerity, right knowledge and chastity. When their impurities dwindle, the ascetics behold Him." Aum Namah Śivāya



## What Are the Holy Orders of Sannyāsa?

### ŚLOKA 120

The holy orders of *sannyāsa* are lifetime vows of poverty, obedience and chastity, never to be relinquished or rescinded. The *sannyāsins* are the religious leaders, the bedrock of the Sanātana Dharma. Aum Namah Śivāya.

### BHĀSHYA

The *sannyāsin's* first sacred vow is renunciation, the surrendering of the limited identity of the ego that the soul may soar to the depths of impersonal Being. It is a repudiation of worldly *dharma* and involvement, and thus includes poverty and simplicity. The *sannyāsin* owns nothing, not even the robes he is given to wear. The second vow is obedience—a pledge to follow the traditional ways of the *sannyāsa dharma* and the specific directions of his *satguru*. It embraces obedience to his own conscience, to scripture, to God and the Gods and to his illustrious *guru paramparā*. The third vow is purity—a pledge to remain pure in thought, word and deed, to be continent throughout life, to protect the mind from all lower instincts: deceit, hatred, fear, jealousy, anger, pride, lust, covetousness and so forth. It includes the observance of *ahimsā*, noninjuriousness, and adherence to a vegetarian diet. Some orders also give vows of humility and confidentiality. The *Vedas* elucidate, “Henceforth being pure, clean, void, tranquil, breathless, selfless, endless, undecaying, steadfast, eternal, unborn, independent, he abides in his own greatness” Aum Namah Śivāya.

## Scriptures Speak on Monastic Life

Girded by the wind, they have donned ocher mud for a garment  
So soon as the Gods have entered within them, they follow the  
wings of the wind, these silent ascetics *Rig Veda*

Let him approach with humility a *guru* who is learned in the  
scriptures and established in Brahman To such a seeker,  
whose mind is tranquil and senses controlled, and who has  
approached him in the proper manner, let the learned *guru*  
impart the science of Brahman, through which the true,  
Imperishable Being is realized *Atharva Veda*

Within him is fire, within him is drink, within him both earth  
and heaven He is the sun which views the whole world, he is  
indeed light itself—the long-haired ascetic *Rig Veda*

Having transcended the desire for sons, the desire for wealth,  
the desire for worlds, they go about as mendicants For the desire  
for sons is the desire for wealth, and the desire for wealth is  
the desire for worlds All these are nothing but desires He, the  
*ātman*, is not this, not this *Yajur Veda*

Having realized with mind and heart, having become  
wise, you will no longer move on the path of death Therefore,  
they call renunciation the ardor surpassing  
all others *Yajur Veda*

What people call salvation is really continence For through  
continence man is freed from ignorance And what is known  
as the vow of silence, that too is really continence For a  
man through continence realizes the Self and lives in quiet  
contemplation *Yajur Veda*

Know, Arjuna, that what men call renunciation is the authentic *yoga*, for without renouncing all desire no man becomes a *yogin*. The silent sage climbing toward *yoga* uses work as a means. Quiescence and serenity are the proper course for one who has attained

*Bhagavad Gītā*

In the one who has conquered his self and is peaceful, the Supreme Self, in heat or cold, joy or pain, honor or disgrace, abides in serenity. He who is full of wisdom and understanding, calm and controlled, to whom a clod, a stone and gold are the same, is in truth a *yogin*.

*Bhagavad Gītā*

A myriad times are they born and die. In a million follies they forget this, and in the darkness of *mala* are enveloped. When at last the hidden Grace of Śiva bursts forth and chases the night away, then is the moment for the soul to renounce. When it does, a radiant light it becomes.

*Tirumantiram*

Hail, O *sannyāsin*, you who knows no guile! Establish in your heart and worship there that Taintless One—Pañchākshara's inmost core, whom neither Viṣṇu nor Brahmā had power to comprehend. You who regards all others as yourself—who in this world can be compared with you? The powerful *karma* your past deeds have wrought will vanish without trace. Daily, on the thought "Is not this *jīva* Śiva?" you must meditate.

*Natchintanaṭ*

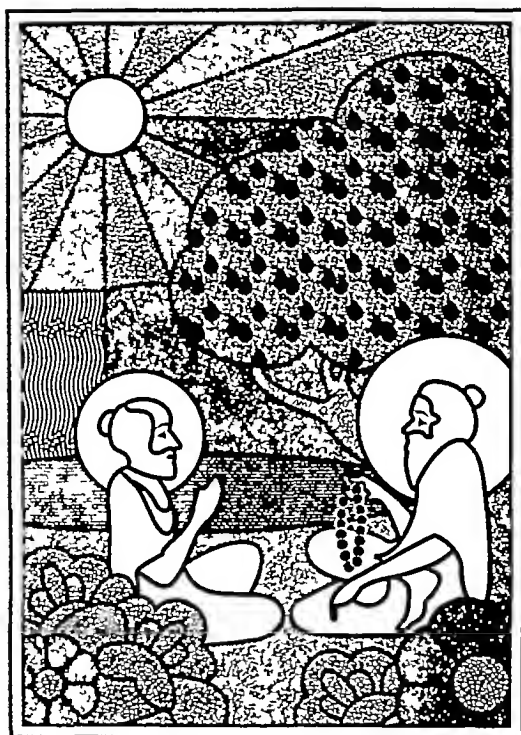
On those who wholeheartedly surrender their possessions, souls and bodies, Naṭarāja, the Gracious Giver, will at once bestow His golden lotus feet. That is the truth!

*Natchintanaṭ*

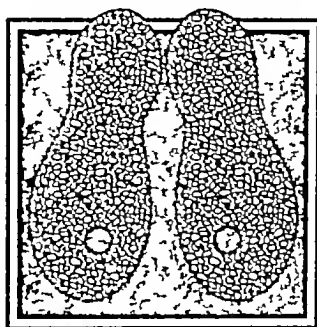
The scriptures exalt above every other good the greatness of virtuous renunciates. Those who renounce totally reach the highest peak, the rest remain enamored in delusion's net.

*Tirukural*





# Jñāni Maṇḍala ज्ञानिमण्डल



## Knowers of God

*Śrī pādukā*, the sacred sandals worn by saints, sages and *satgurus*, symbolize the preceptor's holy feet, which are the source of his grace. Prostrating before him, we humbly touch his feet for release from worldliness. Aum



## Who Are Hinduism's Spiritual Leaders?

### ŚLOKA 121

The saints, sages and *satgurus* who commune with God and Gods through devotion and meditation are Hinduism's holy men and women. We revere them and strive to follow their example and words of wisdom. Aum.

### BHĀSHYA

There are and have always been many holy men and women within the Sanātana Dharma. They are considered holy because of their loving surrender to God and the Gods, their dedication to our faith, their accomplishments and profound realizations. Their knowing is more important than their learning, their purity more essential than their position. It is very difficult to be so disciplined and devoted, and so we honor and love those who have attained God's grace, and worship the divine within them, not their personality or humanness. Because of Hinduism's great diversity and decentralized organization, holy ones are not universally canonized, for there is no single ecclesiastical hierarchy to do this. Still, saints, sages and *satgurus* are sanctified by followers within their own *sampradāya*. Each within his or her own sphere of devotees is the authority on religious matters, listened to and obeyed as such. The *Vedas* declare, "Not understanding, and yet desirous to do so, I ask the wise who know, myself not knowing: 'Who may He be, the One in the form of the Unborn, who props in their place the six universal regions?'" Aum Namah Śivāya



## What Is a Saint, a Sage and a Satguru?

### ŚLOKA 122

Saints, devoid of ego, reflect the peace, humility and purity of a devout life. Sages, though perfectly liberated, may outwardly appear detached and ordinary *Satgurus*, also fully enlightened, guide others on the path Aum

### BHĀSHYA

The saints, or *sants*, of Hinduism are honored as exemplars of our faith. Often living the householder *dharma*, they teach us how to act and how to serve the Gods. The purity of the saint's heart is evident in his or her words and deportment. There are others in our religion who are inwardly pure and awakened, but who do not outwardly display their attainment. These are known as sages and often live as secluded *munis* or wander as homeless mendicants, remaining aloof from the world. *Satgurus* are the masterful guides and mystical awakeners who bring us into the fullness of spiritual life. They are initiated *swāmīs* of recognized spiritual lineages. Sages and *satgurus* are the most honored among holy men, beings of the highest attainment. Both are unmarried renunciates. Sages are generally *nirvānīs*, reposing within their realization, *satgurus* are *upadeśīs*, actively guiding others to Truth. The *Vedas* offer this praise, "We celebrate with dedicated acts the greatness of the illustrious supermen amidst enlightened persons, who are pure, most wise, thought-inspirers, and who enjoy both kinds of our oblations—physical and spiritual." Aum Namah Śivāya



## Are There Other Terms for Holy Ones?

### ŚLOKA 123

Many terms name Hindu masters, teachers and aspirants including *jīvanmukta*, *rishi*, *muni*, *siddha*, *mahātma*, *guru*, *swāmī*, *sannyāsin*, *tapasvin*, *yogī*, *sādhu*, *sādhaka*, *pandita*, *āchārya*, *śāstrī*, *pujārī*, *śishya* and *brahmachārī* Aum

### BHĀSHYA

A *jīvanmukta* is a liberated soul *Rishi* refers to a venerated sage or seer A *muni* is an ecstatic mystic, especially one living in seclusion or vowed to silence *Siddha* refers to a perfected being or one who has attained magical powers *Mahātmā* denotes a great soul or renowned *guru* The term *guru* usually describes a spiritual master, but can connote a teacher of any subject A *sannyāsin*, or *swāmī*, is a formally ordained renunciate monk A *tapasvin* is an ascetic seeking purification through rigorous disciplines The *yogī* is dedicated to intense meditation for inner attainment. *Sādhu* is a general term for a holy man or wandering mendicant A *sādhaka* is a serious seeker of the Self, and is often a monk The *āchārya*, like the *pandita*, is a respected teacher and advisor *Śāstrī* refers to an expert in scripture A *pujārī* is a temple priest A *śishya* is a formal disciple. A *brahmachārī* is a celibate student, often under simple vows Some titles have feminine equivalents, such as *sādhvī*, *yoginī* and *brahmachārīnī* The *Vedas* explain, “The *brahmachārī* moves, strengthening both the worlds In him the *devas* meet in concord, he upholds earth and heaven” Aum Namah Śivāya





## What Is the Nature of Guru Protocol?

### ŚLOKA 124

*Guru* protocol, as outlined in the *Kulārnava Tantra* and *Guru Gītā*, defines the traditional ways of relating to one's spiritual preceptor to draw forth his wisdom and blessings and fully understand his inner nature Aum

### BHĀSHYA

*Guru* protocol can be understood in three parts: devotional acts, codes of harmony and prohibitions. Devotional acts include serving the *guru*, prostrating daily and offering a gift in love, chanting his name and meditating on his inner form as the embodiment of the Divine, partaking of *uc̥chishta*—waters from his holy sandals, and his food leavings—emulating his awakened qualities, seeking initiation and striving for Self Realization as he directs. Codes of harmony include seeking his blessings, obeying his directions, keeping no secrets and honoring his lofty presence. Prohibitions include never contradicting or arguing with the *guru*, never criticizing him, nor listening to criticism by others, not imitating his dress or deportment, not standing or sitting above him, nor walking or driving ahead of him, not assuming authority in his presence, nor uttering words of falsehood or contempt, and not initiating conversation or asking questions unless invited. The *Kulārnava Tantra* explains, “Be always in service of the *guru*, ever in his presence, giving up desire and anger, humble and devoted, lauding in spirit, upright in doing his work” Aum Namah Śivāya



## What Is the Satguru's Unique Function?

### ŚLOKA 125

To transcend the mind and reach the ultimate goal, seekers need the guidance of a *satguru*, an enlightened master who has followed the path to its natural end and can lead them to the Divine within themselves Aum Namah Śivāya.

### BHĀSHYA

The *satguru* is the devotee's spiritual guide and preceptor, friend and companion on the path. Having become religion's consummation, the *satguru* can see where others are and know what their next step should be. Nothing is more precious than the first soul-quickenning, life-changing *śaktipāta* from a *guru*. Nothing is more central to spiritual awakening than the progressive *dīkshās*, or initiations, he bestows. A *satguru* is needed because the mind is so cunning and the ego is a self-perpetuating mechanism. It is he who inspires, assists, guides and impels the *śishya* toward the Self of himself. The *satguru*, perfected in his relationship with Śiva, administers the *sādhana* and *tapas* that slowly incinerate the seeds of *sañchita karmas*. It is his task to preside over the annihilation of the *śishya's* ego and subconscious dross, all the while guiding the awakened *kundalinī* force so that safe, steady progress can be made from stage to stage. The *Āgamas* affirm, "Individuals who become, by the grace of Śiva, eager to extricate themselves from worldly fetters, obtain initiation from a competent preceptor into the path that leads to Śivasāyujya." Aum Namah Śivāya

## Scriptures Speak on Knowers of God

He should be known as one liberated while alive  
 He is blessed and is of fulfilled duties After giving up the state of  
 being liberated while alive, when the time arrives for his quitting  
 the body, he enters on the state of disembodied liberation, even  
 as the air attains the state of nonmovement *Yajur Veda*

Purified, empty, peaceful, breathless, selfless, infinite,  
 indestructible, stable, eternal, unborn, free, he is established  
 in his own glory Having seen the Self who is established  
 in His own glory, he looks upon the wheel of life as a wheel  
 that rolls on. *Yajur Veda*

He should fulfill, according to the rules ordained, for twelve  
 years the observance of *brahmacharya*, such as the service  
 of the *guru* *Atharva Veda*

The Self resides within the lotus of the heart Knowing this,  
 consecrated to the Self, the sage enters daily that holy sanctuary  
 Absorbed in the Self, the sage is freed from identity with the  
 body and lives in blissful consciousness *Sāma Veda*

Let him approach him properly with mind and senses tranquil  
 and peaceful Then will this master disclose the essence of the  
 knowledge of Brahman whereby may be known the imperishable  
 Real, the Person *Atharva Veda*

Without regard for themselves, without urges and efforts,  
 absorbed in contemplation and established in the higher Self,  
 they endeavor to remove evil deeds and surrender their bodies  
 by renunciation Such is a *paramahansa*, such indeed is  
 a *paramahansa*! *Yajur Veda*

Earnest seekers who worship enlightened ones at sight—  
with perfume, flowers, water, fruits, incense, clothing and  
food, or by word, deed and thought—are absolved  
then and there

*Devikālottara Āgama*

The *guru* who has attained Self Realization can alone help the  
aspirant in acquiring it

*Śiva Sūtras*

Those who themselves have seen the Truth can be thy teachers  
of wisdom Ask from them, bow unto them, be thou unto  
them a servant

*Bhagavad Gītā*

One should worship his *guru* by daily performing full prostrations  
to him By worship, one attains steadiness and ultimately realizes  
one's own true nature

*Guru Gītā*

At the root of *dhyāna* is the form of the *guru* At the root of  
*pūjā* are the feet of the *guru* At the root of *mantra* is the word  
of the *guru*, and at the root of all liberation is the  
grace of the *guru*

*Kulārṇava Tantra*

Where there is a holy man of divine worth who pursues  
the Lord, that all space embraces, there enemies are none Rains  
in abundance fall Full is the people's contentment  
No evil befalls that land

*Tirumantiram*

The heart of the holy trembles not in fear All passions stilled, it  
enjoys calm unruffled Neither is there death nor pain, nor night  
nor day, nor fruits of *karma* to experience. That, truly, is the state  
of those who have renounced desire

*Tirumantiram*

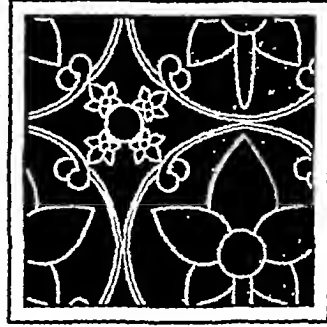
He who has realized by himself his soul's Self will be worshiped  
by all other souls

*Tirukural*



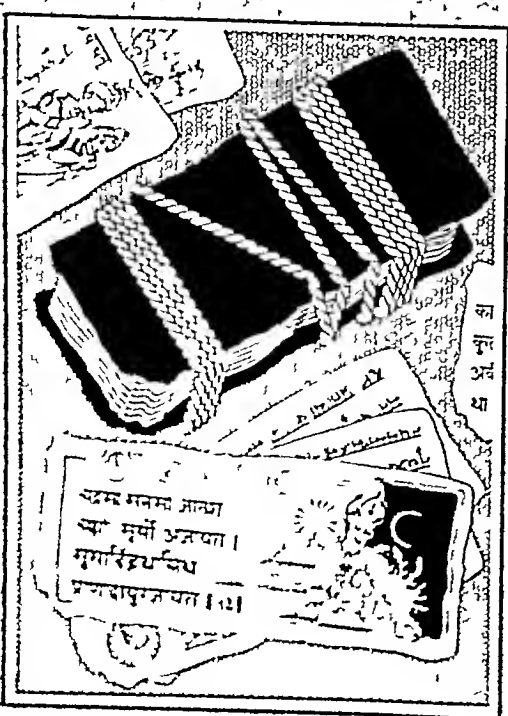
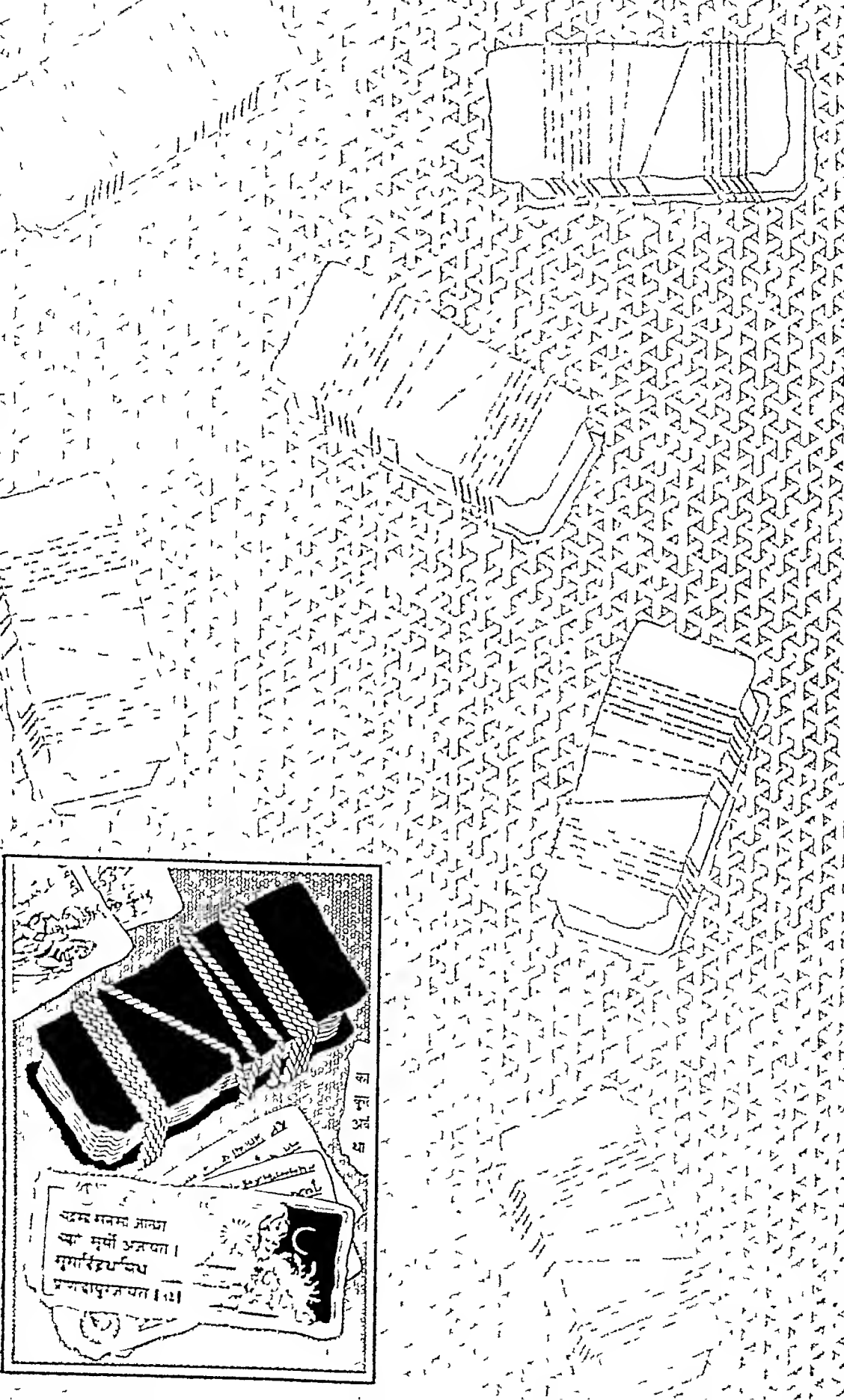
Śāstra Upanishad

शास्त्र उपनिषद्



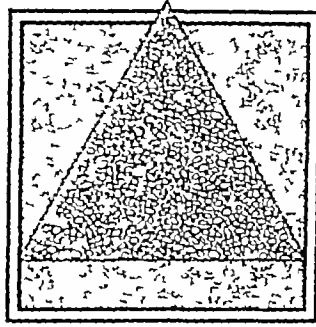
**Sacred Scripture**





Śruti Maṇḍala

श्रुतिमण्डल



## Revealed Scripture

*Trikona*, the triangle, is a symbol of God Śiva which, like the Śivalinga, denotes His Absolute Being. It represents the element fire and portrays the process of spiritual ascent and liberation spoken of in scripture. Aum



## What Are Hindu Revealed Scriptures?

### ŚLOKA 126

The *Vedas* and *Āgamas*, revealed by God, are Hinduism's sovereign scriptures, called *śruti*, "that which is heard." Their timeless truths are expressed in the most extraordinarily profound mystical poetry known to man. Aum.

### BHĀSHYA

*Veda*, from *vid*, "to know," means "supreme wisdom or science." Similarly, *Āgama*, which names the sacred sectarian revelations, means "descent of knowledge." The *Vedas* and *Āgamas* are eternal truths transmitted by God through great clairaudient and clairvoyant *rishis*. They are Hinduism's primary and most authoritative scriptures, expounding life's sacredness and man's purpose on the planet. These psalms of wisdom were disclosed over many centuries, memorized and orally conveyed from generation to generation within priestly families, then finally written down in Sanskrit in the last few millennia. The subtly symbolic language of *śruti*, the cherished word of God, is lyrical and lofty. In imparting religious practice, rules and doctrine, the *Vedas* are general and the *Āgamas* specific. The *Vedas* extol and invoke a multiplicity of Gods through elaborate fire rituals called *yajña*. The *Āgamas* center around a single Deity and His worship with water, flowers and lights in sanctified temples and shrines. The *Tirumantiram* lauds, "Two are the scriptures that Lord Śiva revealed—the primal *Vedas* and the perfect *Āgamas*." Aum Namah Śivāya.



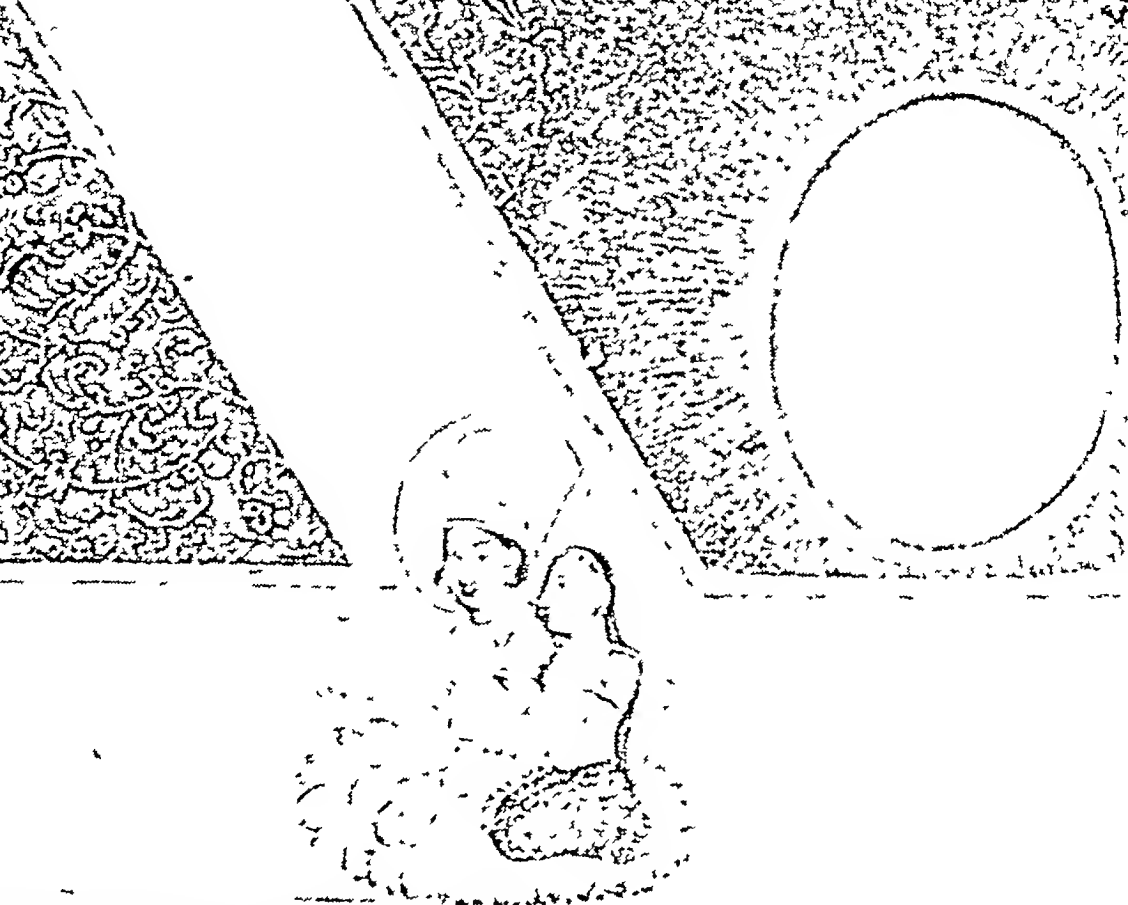
## What Is the Nature of the Veda Texts?

### ŚLOKA 127

The holy *Vedas*, man's oldest scripture, dating back 6,000 to 8,000 years, are a collection of four books: the *Rīg*, *Sāma*, *Yajur* and *Atharva*. Each has four sections: hymns, rites, interpretation and philosophical instruction. Aum

### BHĀSHYA

The oldest and core portions of the *Vedas* are the four *Samhitās*, "hymn collections." They consist of invocations to the One Divine and the divinities of nature, such as the Sun, the Rain, the Wind, the Fire and the Dawn—as well as prayers for matrimony, progeny, prosperity, concord, domestic rites, formulas for magic, and more. They are composed in beautiful metrical verses, generally of three or four lines. The heart of the entire *Veda* is the 10,552-verse *Rīg Samhitā*. The *Sāma* and *Yajur Samhitās*, each with about 2,000 verses, are mainly liturgical selections from the *Rīg*; whereas most of the *Atharva Samhitā*'s nearly 6,000 verses of prayers, charms and rites are unique. The *Sāma* is arranged for melodious chanting, the *Yajur* for cadenced intonation. Besides its *Samhitā*, each *Veda* includes one or two *Brāhmanas*, ceremonial handbooks, and *Āranyakas*, ritual interpretations, plus many inestimable *Upanishads*, metaphysical dialogs. In all there are over 100,000 Vedic verses, and some prose, in dozens of texts. The *Tirumantiram* confirms, "There is no *dharma* other than what the *Vedas* say. *Dharma*'s central core the *Vedas* proclaim." Aum Namah Śivāya.



## How Are the Vedas Significant Today?

### ŚLOKA 128

The *Vedas*, the ultimate scriptural authority, permeate Hinduism's thought, ritual and meditation. They open a rare window into ancient Bhārata society, proclaiming life's sacredness and the way to oneness with God. Aum.

### BHĀSHYA

Like the Taoist *Tao te Ching*, the Buddhist *Dhammapada*, the Sikh *Ādi Granth*, the Jewish *Torah*, the Christian *Bible* and the Muslim *Koran*—the *Veda* is the Hindu holy book. For untold centuries unto today, it has remained the sustaining force and authoritative doctrine, guiding followers in ways of worship, duty and enlightenment—*upāsana*, *dharma* and *jñāna*. The *Vedas* are the meditative and philosophical focus for millions of monks and a billion seekers. Their stanzas are chanted from memory by priests and laymen daily as liturgy in temple worship and domestic ritual. All Hindus wholeheartedly accept the *Vedas*, yet each draws selectively, interprets freely and amplifies abundantly. Over time, this tolerant allegiance has woven the varied tapestry of Bhārata Dharma. Today the *Vedas* are published in Sanskrit, English, French, German and other languages. But it is the metaphysical and popular *Upanishads* which have been most amply and ably translated. The *Vedas* say, "Just as the spokes are affixed to the hub of a wheel, so are all things established in life, the *Rig* and *Yajur* and *Sāma Veda*, sacrifice, the nobility and also the priesthood." Aum Namah Śivāya





## What Is the Nature of the Holy Āgamas?

ŚLOKA 129

The *Āgamas*, Sanātana Dharma's second authority, are revelations on sacred living, worship, *yoga* and philosophy Śaivism, Śāktism and Vaishnavism each exalts its own array of *Āgamas*, many over 2,000 years old Aum

BHĀSHYA

In the vast Āgamic literature, tradition counts 92 main *Śaiva Āgamas*—10 Śiva, 18 Rudra and 64 Bhairava—77 *Śākta Āgamas* and 108 *Vaishnava Pañcharātra Āgamas*. Most *Āgamas* are of four parts, called *pādas*, and possess thousands of metered Sanskrit verses, usually of two lines. The *charyā pāda* details daily religious observance, right conduct, the *guru-śishya* relationship, community life, house design and town planning. The *kriyā pāda*, commonly the longest, extols worship and temples in meticulous detail—from site selection, architectural design and iconography, to rules for priests and the intricacies of daily *pūjā*, annual festivals and home-shrine devotionals. The *yoga pāda* discloses the interior way of meditation, of *rāja yoga*, *mantra* and *tantra* which stimulates the awakening of the slumbering serpent, *kundalinī*. The *jñāna pāda* narrates the nature of God, soul and world, and the means for liberation. The *Tirumantiram* declares, “*Veda* and *Āgama* are Iraivan's scriptures. Both are truth—one is general, the other specific. While some say these words of God reach two different conclusions, the wise see no difference.” Aum Namah Śivāya

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥  
 देव  
 मार्गमणिः देहीनादनं  
 नाकारसदेवसुसमा  
 सदेवः सदेवस्यत्पमिः  
 वा सायुज्याता सावदा  
 र वायुयादिर्धेः

दयस्थाने चेतवर्त्म  
 ता उमाशक्तिः विरल  
 पाणवायुः ज्योतिः क  
 वस्था पश्येतीकक  
 शिवलिंगमात्मभूमि  
 दशकला ॥ १५ ॥ अंतर्मा  
 नेते दहिर्मय



ॐ ॥ सहेतनादते  
 दिस्थिते यस्यतस्मै  
 तकात् अदादते मदाचक्रं सर्वकालि  
 ते मनसाधार येजीमान्महाया  
 प्रणाशकं तस्माच्चक्रमिदं ते  
 यथेयं यथा ततनचित् ॥ ॥ ॥



एतासा मसिकोपोक्तसोहेभवेन  
 जयेत् अत्रकेधादिसमर्पयेत् ॥ ॥ ॥

## How Are the Āgamas Significant Today?

### ŚLOKA 130

While the *Vedas*, with myriad Deities, bind all Hindus together, the *Āgamas*, with a single supreme God, unify each sect in a oneness of thought, instilling in adherents the joyful arts of divine adoration. Aum Namah Śivāya

### BHĀSHYA

God is love, and to love God is the pure path prescribed in the *Āgamas*. Veritably, these texts are God's own voice admonishing the *samsārī*, reincarnation's wanderer, to give up love of the transient and adore instead the Immortal. How to love the Divine, when and where, with what *mantras* and visualizations and at what auspicious times, all this is preserved in the *Āgamas*. The specific doctrines and practices of day-to-day Hinduism are nowhere more fully expounded than in these revelation hymns, delineating everything from daily work routines to astrology and cosmology. So overwhelming is Āgamic influence in the lives of most Hindus, particularly in temple liturgy and culture, that it is impossible to ponder modern Sanātana Dharma without these discourses. While many *Āgamas* have been published, most remain inaccessible, protected by families and guilds who are stewards of an intimate hereditary knowledge. The *Tirumantiram* says, "Nine are the *Āgamas* of yore, in time expanded into twenty-eight, they then took divisions three, into one truth of Vedānta-Siddhānta to accord. That is Śuddha Śaiva, rare and precious." Aum Namah Śivāya

## Scriptures Speak on Śruti

The efforts of man are stated to be of two kinds, those that transcend scriptures and those that are according to scriptures. Those that transcend scriptures tend to harm, while those that are according to scriptures tend to Reality. *Yajur Veda*

As when a fire is lit with damp fuel, different clouds of smoke come forth, in the same way from this great Being are breathed forth the *Rīg Veda*, *Yajur Veda*, *Sāma Veda*, *Atharva Veda*. *Yajur Veda*

There, where there is no darkness, nor night, nor day, nor being, nor nonbeing, there is the Auspicious One, alone, absolute and eternal. There is the glorious splendor of that Light from whom in the beginning sprang ancient wisdom. *Yajur Veda*

Taking as a bow the great weapon of the *Upanishad*, one should put upon it an arrow sharpened by meditation. Stretching it with a thought directed to the essence of That, penetrate that Imperishable as the mark, my friend. *Atharva Veda*

By the power of inner harmony and by the grace of God, Śvetāśvatara had the vision of Brahman. He then spoke to his nearest hermit-students about the supreme purification, about Brahman, whom the seers adore. *Yajur Veda*

*Aum* One should meditate on this syllable as the Udgītha chant, for every chant starts with *Aum*. Of this the explanation is as follows: The essence of all beings is the earth, the essence of the earth is water, the essence of water is plants, the essence of plants is man, the essence of man is speech, the essence of speech is the *Rīg Veda*, the essence of the *Rīg Veda* is the *Sāma Veda*, and the essence of the *Sāma Veda* is the Udgītha chant. *Sāma Veda*

The Śaivism of Siddhānta is the Śaivism of the *Āgamas*, the first of which is the *Kāmika*  
*Kārana Āgama*

In the beauteous *Veda*, aptly named the *Riḡ*, as the moving mood behind He stood In the trembling chant of the Vedic priests He stood, Himself the eye of vision central  
*Tirumantiram*

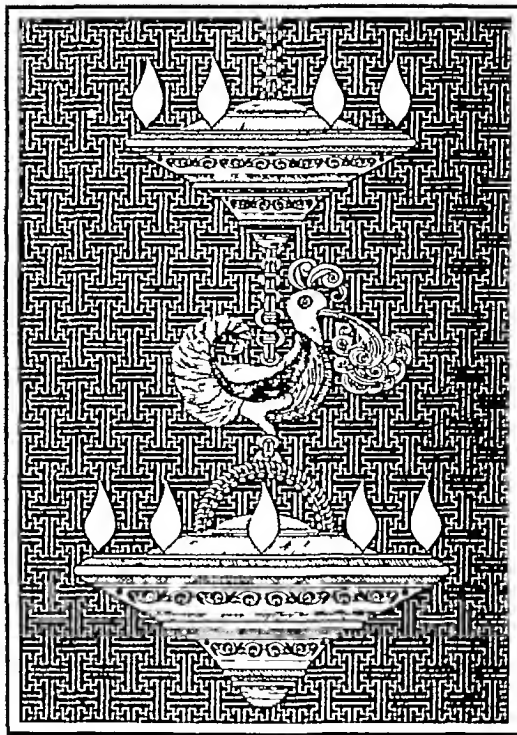
All the world may well attain the bliss I have—who hold firmly to the heavenly secret the books impart, who chant the hymns that thrill the flesh and swell the heart. Strive, always strive, then it will come  
*Tirumantiram*

Behold the father of the elephant-faced Ganapati who dons the *konrai* garland and has matted locks, the author of the ageless *Vedas*, the Auspicious One He is ours by virtue of spiritual efforts (*tapas*) He abides in the hallowed temple of Rāmeśvaram  
*Tirumurai*

May the sun and moon be my protection! May all beings everywhere be my protection! May *mantras* and *tantras* be my protection! May the four *Vedas*, the *Śaiva Āgamas* and the whole world be my protection!  
*Natchintanai*

A thousand scriptures speak of His attributes and signs, His shrines, His paths, His greatness—O, witless people, that your hearts have not been won!  
*Tirumurai*

As heaven resounded with Hara's name, with the chants of the *Veda* and *Āgama*, and the hymns of the learned *brāhmīns*, the Highest God in Notittanmalai showed me the path, the Lord who gives all blessings gave me a splendid elephant to ride  
*Tirumurai*



Smṛiti Maṇḍala

स्मृतिमण्डल



Secondary Scripture

*Seval* is the noble red rooster who heralds each dawn, calling all to awake and arise. He is a symbol of the imminence of spiritual unfoldment and wisdom. As a fighting cock, he crows from Lord Skanda's battle flag. Aum





## Do Smṛiti and Sacred Literature Differ?

### ŚLOKA 131

Hindu sacred literature is a treasury of hymns, legend, mythology, philosophy, science and ethics. From among this vast body of writings, each lineage recognizes a select portion as its secondary scripture, called *smṛiti*. Aum.

### BHĀSHYA

While the *Vedas* and *Agamas* are shared as part of every Hindu's primary scripture, *śruti*, each sect and lineage defines its own unique set of *smṛiti*. The sacred literature, *punya śāstra*, from which *smṛiti* is drawn consists of writings, both ancient and modern, in many languages. Especially central are the ancient Sanskrit texts, such as the *Itihāsas*, *Purānas* and *Dharma Śāstras*, which are widely termed the classical *smṛiti*. In reality, while many revere these as *smṛiti*, others regard them only as sacred literature. *Smṛiti* means "that which is remembered" and is known as "the tradition," for it derives from human insight and experience and preserves the course of culture. While *śruti* comes from God and is eternal and universal, the ever-growing *smṛiti* canon is written by man. Hinduism's sacred literature is the touchstone of theater and dance, music, song and pageantry, *yoga* and *sādhana*, metaphysics and ethics, exquisite art and hallowed sciences. The *Vedas* inquire, "In whom are set firm the firstborn seers, the hymns, the songs and the sacrificial formulas, in whom is established the single seer—tell me of that support—who may He be?" Aum Namah Śivāya.



## What Texts Amplify Vedas and Āgamas?

### ŚLOKA 132

Many texts support the *Vedas* and *Āgamas* *Vedāngas* detail conduct, astrology, language and etymology *Upavedas* unfold politics, health, warfare and music *Upāgamas* and *Paddhatīs* elaborate the Āgamic wisdom Aum

### BHĀSHYA

Much of Hinduism's practical knowledge is safeguarded in venerable texts which amplify *śruti*. The *Vedāngas* and *Upavedas* are collections of texts that augment and apply the *Vedas* as a comprehensive system of sacred living. *Jyotiṣa Vedāṅga* delineates auspicious timing for holy rites. *Kalpa Vedāṅga* defines public rituals in the *Śrauta* and *Śulba Sūtras*, domestic rites in the *Grihya Sūtras* and religious law in the *Dharma Śāstras*. Four other *Vedāngas* ensure the purity of *mantra* recitation, through knowledge of phonetics, grammar, poetry and the way of words. The *Upavedas* expound profound sciences. *Artha-veda* unfolds statecraft; *Āyurveda* sets forth medicine and health; *Dhanurveda* discusses military science, *Gāndhārvaveda* illumines music and the arts, and *Sthāpatya-veda* explains architecture. In addition, the *Kāma Sūtras* detail erotic pleasures. The *Āgamas*, too, have ancillary texts, such as the *Upāgamas* and *Paddhatīs*, which elaborate the ancient wisdom. The *Jñāneśvarī* says, "The *Vedas* in their perfection are as the beautiful image of the God, of which the flawless words are the resplendent body. The *smṛitis* are the limbs thereof" Aum Namah Śivāya



# Does Hinduism Have Epics and Myths?

## ŚLOKA 133

The *Mahābhārata* and *Rāmāyana* are Hinduism's most renowned epic histories, called *Itihāsa*. The *Purāṇas* are popular folk narratives, teaching faith, belief and ethics in mythology, allegory, legend and symbolism. Aum

## BHĀSHYA

Hinduism's poetic stories of *rishis*, Gods, heroes and demons are sung by gifted *panditas* and traveling bards, narrated to children and portrayed in dramas and festivals. The *Mahābhārata*, the world's longest epic poem, is the legend of two ancient dynasties whose great battle of Kurukshetra is the scene of the *Bhagavad Gītā*, the eloquent spiritual dialog between Arjuna and Krishna. The *Rāmāyana* relates the life of Rāma, a heroic king revered as the ideal man. The *Purāṇas*, like the *Mahābhārata*, are encyclopedic in scope, containing teachings on *sādhana*, philosophy, *dharma*, ritual, language and the arts, architecture, agriculture, magic charms and more. Of eighteen principal *Purāṇas*, six honor God as Śiva, six as Vishnu and six as Brahmā. The witty *Pañchatantra*, eminent among the "story" literature, or *kathā*, portrays wisdom through animal fables and parables. The *Bhagavad Gītā* proclaims, "He who reads this sacred dialog of ours, by him I consider Myself worshiped through the sacrifice of knowledge. And the man who listens to it with faith and without scoffing, liberated, he shall attain to the happy realm of the righteous." Aum Namah Śivāya



## Are There Other Types of Sacred Texts?

### ŚLOKA 134

India's lofty philosophical texts expound diverse views in exacting dialectics. *Yoga* treatises unveil the mysterious path to ultimate *samādhis*. Intimate devotional hymns disclose the raptures of consummate Divine love. Aum

### BHĀSHYA

In addition to the epics, legends and supplements to the *Vedas* and *Āgamas*, there is a wealth of Hindu metaphysical, *yogic* and devotional writings. Considered foundational are the early texts defining the six philosophical *darśanas* the *sūtras* by Kapila, Patañjali, Jaimini, Bādarāyana, Kanāda and Gautama. Hailed as leading occult works on *yoga*, *āsanas*, *nāḍīs*, *chakras*, *kundalinī* and *samādhi* are the *Yoga Sūtras*, *Tirumantiram*, *Yoga Vāsishtha*, *Śiva Sūtras*, *Siddha Siddhānta Paddhati*, *Jñāneśvarī*, *Hatha Yoga Pradīpikā* and *Gheranda Samhitā*. Widely extolled among the *bhakti* literature are the *Bhagavad Gītā*, *Nārada Sūtras*, *Tiruvāṣaṅgam*, the *Vachanas* of the Śiva-śaranās and the hymns of mystic poets like Sūrdās, Tukaram, Rāmprasad, Mīrābāī, Andal, Vallabha, Tulasīdāsa, Tayumanavar, Lallā, Tagore, Auvaiyar and the saintly Nayanars and Alvars. The *Bhagavad Gītā* explains, "As a blazing fire reduces the wood to ashes, O Arjuna, so does the fire of knowledge reduce all activity to ashes. There is nothing on earth which possesses such power to cleanse as wisdom. The perfect *yogin* finds this knowledge in himself by himself in due time." Aum Namah Śivāya.





## What Is the Source of This Catechism?

### ŚLOKA 135

The philosophical basis of this catechism is the monistic Śaiva Siddhānta of the Kailāsa Paramparā as expressed in the *Vedas*, *Śaiva Āgamas*, *Tirukural*, *Tirumurai*, *Tirumantiram* and contemporary scripture Aum Namah Śivāya

### BHĀSHYA

This catechism, *praśnottaram*, is the creation of the living lineage of seers known as the Kailāsa Paramparā, of the South Indian Śaivite school called Śuddha Śaiva Siddhānta, Advaita Siddhānta or monistic Śaiva Siddhānta. It reflects the teachings of the *Vedas* and *Śaiva Āgamas*, the profound Tamil scriptures *Tirumurai* and *Tirukural* and the revelations of contemporary Kailāsa *gurus*. The *Tirumurai* is a twelve-book collection of hymns of numerous Śaivite saints. Most important among these is the *Tirumantiram*, a *siddha yoga* treatise by Rishi Tirumular, recording the Śaiva tenets in 3,047 verses. It is prized as the confluence of Siddhānta and Vedānta. The *Tirukural*, containing 1,330 couplets by the weaver saint Tiruvalluvar, is among the world's greatest ethical scriptures, sworn on in South Indian courts of law. *Natchintanai* are the sacred hymns of Sri Lanka's Sage Yogaswāmī. Tayumanavar says, "I meditate on the great light of the Siddhānta, the thought of all thoughts, the life of all life, which, existing in all objects without distinction, causes a spring of inestimably pure and happy nectar to flow for the good of its followers." Aum Namah Śivāya

## Scriptures Speak on Smṛiti

Just as the luminous day is born from light, so may the radiant singers shine far and wide! Truly, the poet's wisdom enhances the glory of the Ordinance decreed by God, the Powerful, the Ancient.

*Atharva Veda*

The Word, verily, is greater than name The Word, in fact, makes known the *Rig Veda*, the *Yajur Veda*, the *Sāma Veda*, the *Atharva Veda* as the fourth, and the ancient lore as the fifth the *Veda* of *Vedas*, the ritual for ancestors, calculus, the augural sciences, the knowledge of the signs of the times, ethics, political science, sacred knowledge, theology, knowledge of the spirits, military science, astrology, the science of snakes and of celestial beings The Word also makes known heaven, earth, wind, space, the waters, fire, the Gods, men, animals, birds, grass and trees, all animals down to worms, insects and ants It also makes known what is right and wrong, truth and untruth, good and evil, what is pleasing and what is unpleasing Verily, if there were no Word, there would be knowledge neither of right and wrong, nor of truth and untruth, nor of the pleasing and unpleasing The Word makes all this known Meditate on the Word

*Sāma Veda*

The man who rejects the words of the scriptures and follows the impulse of desire attains neither his perfection, nor joy, nor the Path Supreme Let the scriptures be, therefore, thy authority as to what is right and what is not right

*Bhagavad Gītā*

Just as gold is freed from its dross only by fire, and acquires its shining appearance from heat, so the mind of a living being, cleansed from the filth of his actions and his desires through his love for Me, is transformed into My transcendent likeness The mind is purified through the hearing and uttering of sacred hymns in My praise

*Bhāgavata Purāṇa*

If daily to his home the friends who love him come, and coming,  
bring delight to eyes that kindle bright, a man has found the whole  
of life within his soul *Pañchatantra*

He who worships the Linga, knowing it to be the first cause, the  
source of consciousness, the substance of the universe, is nearer to  
Me than any other being *Śiva Purāṇa*

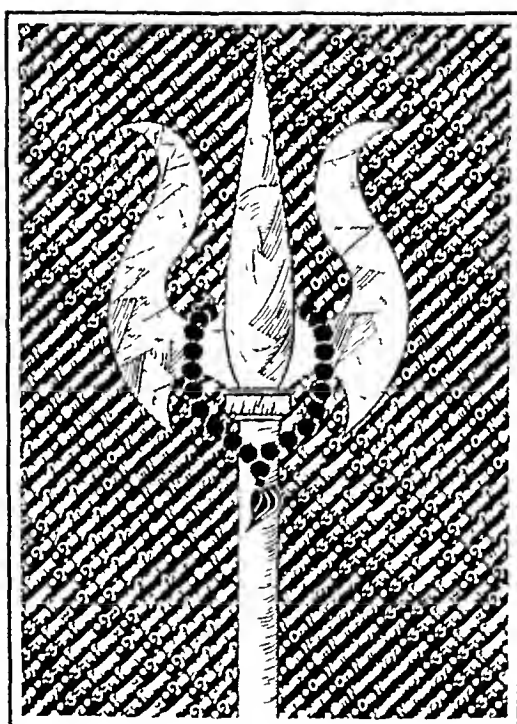
With the help of the gardeners called Mind and Love,  
plucking the flower called Steady Contemplation, offering the  
water of the flood of the Self's own bliss, worship the Lord with the  
sacred formula of silence! *Lallā*

Who will finish this suffering of mine? Who will take my burden  
on himself? Thy name will carry me over the sea of this world  
Thou dost run to help the distressed Now run to me, Nārāyaṇa, to  
me, poor and wretched as I am Consider neither my merit nor  
my faults Tukārām implores thy mercy *Tukārām*

The pot is a God The winnowing fan is a God  
The stone in the street is a God The comb is a God The  
bowstring is also a God. The bushel is a God and the spouted cup  
is a God Gods, Gods, there are so many, there's no place left for  
a foot There is only one God He is our Lord of the  
meeting rivers *Vachanas of Basavanna*

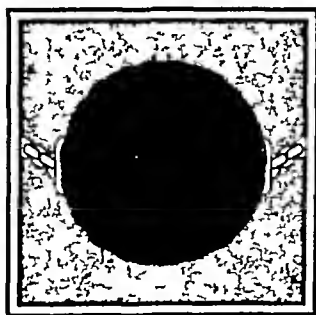
They will find enduring joy who praise the auspicious  
God who knows the four *Vedas* and the six sacred sciences,  
who is Himself the sacred Word recited by scholars of the  
scripture *Tirumurai*

The eighteen *Purāṇas* are the rich ornaments, and the theories  
propounded in them are the gems for which the rhythmic style  
provides the settings *Jñāneśvarī*



Mantra Maṇḍala

मन्त्रमण्डल



## Mantra And Affirmation

*Rudrāksha* seeds, *Eleocarpus ganitrus*, are prized as the compassionate tears Lord Śiva shed for mankind's suffering. Śaivites wear *mālās* of them always as a symbol of God's love, chanting on each bead, "Aum Namah Śivāya."



## What Is the Holy Namaḥ Śivāya Mantra?

### ŚLOKA 136

Namaḥ Śivāya is among the foremost Vedic *mantras*. It means “adoration to Śiva,” and is called the Pañchākshara, or “five-letters.” Within its celestial tones and hues resides all of the intuitive knowledge of Śaivism. Aum

### BHĀSHYA

Namaḥ Śivāya is the most holy name of God Śiva, recorded at the very center of the *Vedas* and elaborated in the *Śaiva Āgamas*. *Na* is the Lord’s concealing grace, *Ma* is the world, *Śi* stands for Śiva, *Vā* is His revealing grace, *Ya* is the soul. The five elements, too, are embodied in this ancient formula for invocation. *Na* is earth, *Ma* is water, *Śi* is fire, *Vā* is air, and *Ya* is ether, or *ākāśa*. Many are its meanings. Namaḥ Śivāya has such power, the mere intonation of these syllables reaps its own reward in salvaging the soul from bondages of the treacherous instinctive mind and the steel bands of a perfected externalized intellect. Namaḥ Śivāya quells the instinct, cuts through the steel bands and turns this intellect within and on itself, to face itself and see its ignorance. Sages declare that *mantra* is life, that *mantra* is action, that *mantra* is love and that the repetition of *mantra*, *japa*, bursts forth wisdom from within. The holy *Natchintanaḥ* proclaims, “Namaḥ Śivāya is in truth both *Āgama* and *Veda*. Namaḥ Śivāya represents all *mantras* and *tantras*. Namaḥ Śivāya is our souls, our bodies and possessions. Namaḥ Śivāya has become our sure protection.” Aum Namaḥ Śivāya





## How Is Namaḥ Śivāya Properly Chanted?

### ŚLOKA 137

The Pañchākshara Mantra, Namaḥ Śivāya, is repeated verbally or mentally, often while counting a *mālā* of *rudrāksha* beads, drawing the mind in upon itself to cognize Lord Śiva's infinite, all-pervasive presence Aum.

### BHĀSHYA

*Japa yoga* is the first *yoga* to be performed toward the goal of *jñāna*. In the temple perform *japa*. Under your favorite tree perform *japa*. Seated in a remote cave perform *japa*. Aum Namaḥ Śivāya can be performed on *rudrāksha* beads over and over when the sun is setting, when the sun is rising or high noon lights the day. "Aum Namaḥ Śivāya," the Śaivite chants. Aum Namaḥ Śivāya feeds his soul, brightens his intellect and quells his instinctive mind. Take the holy tears of Śiva, the auburn *rudrāksha* beads, into your hands. Push a bead over the middle finger with your thumb and hold as the intonation marks its passage. The duly initiated audibly repeats "Namaḥ Śivāya," and when *japa* is performed silently, mentally chants "Śivāya Namaḥ." There are many ways to chant this *mantra*, but perform it as you were initiated. Unauthorized experimentation is forbidden. Those prone to angry rage should never do *japa*. The *Tirumantiram* announces, "His feet are the letter *Na*. His navel is the letter *Ma*. His shoulders are the letter *Śi*. His mouth, the letter *Vā*. His radiant cranial center aloft is *Ya*. Thus is the five-lettered form of Śiva." Aum Namaḥ Śivāya



## Is Initiation Necessary to Perform Japa?

### ŚLOKA 138

The most precious of all Śaivite *mantras*, *Namah Śivāya* is freely sung and chanted by one and all *Mantra dīkshā* bestows the permission and power for *japa yoga*. Without this initiation, its repetition bears lesser fruit Aum.

### BHĀSHYA

The Pañchākshara Mantra is the word of God, the name and total essence of Śiva. But to chant *Namah Śivāya* and to be empowered to chant *Namah Śivāya* is likened to the difference between writing a check without money in the bank and writing a check with money in the bank. *Namah Śivāya* is the gateway to *yoga*. Initiation from an orthodox *guru* is given after preparation, training and attaining a certain level of purity and dedication. The *guru* bestows the authority to chant *Namah Śivāya*. After initiation, the devotee is obligated to intone it regularly as instructed. This forges the *śishya's* permanent bond with the *guru* and his spiritual lineage, *sampradāya*, and fires the process of inner unfoldment. From the lips of my Satgurunātha I learned *Namah Śivāya*, and it has been the central core of my life, strength and fulfillment of destiny. The secret of *Namah Śivāya* is to hear it from the right lips at the right time. Then, and only then, is it the most powerful *mantra* for you. The *Śiva Samhitā* affirms, "Only the knowledge imparted by a *guru*, through his lips, is powerful and useful, otherwise it becomes fruitless, weak and very painful." Aum *Namah Śivāya*.



## What Is Śaivism's Affirmation of Faith?

### ŚLOKA 139

The proclamation "God Śiva is Immanent Love and Transcendent Reality" is a potent affirmation of faith. Said in any of Earth's 3,000 languages, it summarizes the beliefs and doctrines of the Śaivite Hindu religion. Aum.

### BHĀSHYA

An affirmation of faith is a terse, concise statement summarizing a complex philosophical tradition. "God Śiva is Immanent Love and Transcendent Reality," is what we have when we take the milk from the sacred cow of Śaivism, separate out the cream, churn that cream to rich butter and boil that butter into a precious few drops of *ghee*. "God Śiva is Immanent Love and Transcendent Reality" is the sweet *ghee* of the Śaivite Hindu religion. In the Sanskrit language it is *Premaiva Śivamaya, Satyam eva Paraśivah*. In the sweet Tamil language it is even more succinct and beautiful *Anbe Śivamayam, Satyame Paraśivam*. In French it is *Dieu Śiva est Amour omniprésent et Réalité transcendante*. We strengthen our mind with positive affirmations that record the impressions of the distilled and ultimate truths of our religion so that these memories fortify us in times of distress, worldliness or anxiety. The *Tirumantiram* proclaims, "Transcending all, yet immanent in each He stands. For those bound in the world here below, He is the great treasure. Himself the Parapara Supreme, for all worlds He gave the way that His greatness extends." Aum Namah Śivāya



## How Is the Affirmation of Faith Used?

### ŚLOKA 140

Intoning the affirmation of faith, we positively assert that God is both manifest and unmanifest, both permeating the world and transcending it, both personal Divine Love and impersonal Reality Aum Namah Śivāya

### BHĀSHYA

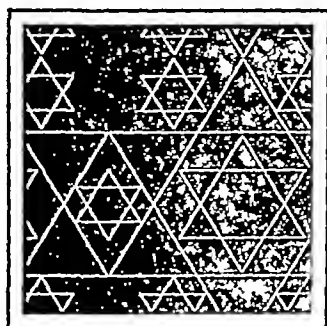
On the lips of Śaivites throughout the world resounds the proclamation “God Śiva is Immanent Love and Transcendent Reality” It is a statement of fact, a summation of truth, even more potent when intoned in one’s native language “God Śiva is Immanent Love and Transcendent Reality,” we repeat prior to sleep “God Śiva is Immanent Love and Transcendent Reality,” we say upon awakening as we recall the transcendent knowledge gained from the *rishis* during sleep These sacred words we say as we bathe to prepare to face the day, God Śiva’s day, reminding ourselves that His immanent love protects us, guides us, lifting our mind into the arena of useful thoughts and keeping us from harm’s way Devotees write this affirmation 1,008 times as a *sahasra lekhana sādhana* It may be spoken 108 times daily in any language before initiation into Namah Śivāya Yea, the recitation of this affirmation draws devotees into Śiva-consciousness The *Tirumantiram* says, “The ignorant prate that love and Śiva are two They do not know that love alone is Śiva When men know that love and Śiva are the same, love as Śiva they ever remain” Aum Namah Śivāya





Advaita Īśvaravāda Upanishad

अद्वैत ईश्वरवाद उपनिषद्



Monistic Theism



## What Are the Many Hindu Philosophies?

### ŚLOKA 141

From time immemorial, India's sages and philosophers have pondered the nature of reality Out of their speculations have blossomed hundreds of schools of thought, all evolving from the rich soil of village Hinduism Aum

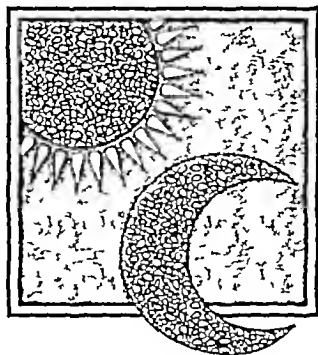
### BHĀSHYA

At one end of Hinduism's complex spectrum is monism, *advaita*, which perceives a unity of God, soul and world, as in Śankara's acosmic pantheism and Kashmīr Śaiva monism At the other end is dualism, *dvaita*—exemplified by Mādhva and the early Pāśupatas—which teaches two or more separate realities In between are views describing reality as one and yet not one, *dvaita-advaita*, such as Rāmānuja's Vaishnava Vedānta and Śrīkantha's Śaiva Viśishtādvaita Hindu philosophy consists of many schools of Vedic and Āgamic thought, including the six classical *darśanas*—Nyāya, Vaiśeṣika, Sāṅkhya, Yoga, Mīmāṃsā and Vedānta Each theology expresses the quest for God and is influenced by the myth, mystery and cultural syncretism of contemporary, tribal, shamanic Hinduism alive in every village in every age India also produced views, called *nāstika*, that reject the *Vedas* and are thus not part of Hinduism, such as Jainism, Sikhism, Buddhism and Chārvāka materialistic atheism The *Vedas* state, "Theologians ask What is the cause? Is it Brahmā? Whence are we born? Whereby do we live? And on what are we established?" Aum Namah Śivāya



Advaita-Dvaita Maṇḍala

अद्वैतद्वैतमण्डल



# Monism and Dualism

*Chandra* is the moon, ruler of the watery realms and of emotion, testing place of migrating souls *Sūrya* is the sun, ruler of intellect, source of truth One is *pingalā* and lights the day, the other is *idā* and lights the night Aum



## What Are the Many Hindu Philosophies?

### ŚLOKA 141

From time immemorial, India's sages and philosophers have pondered the nature of reality Out of their speculations have blossomed hundreds of schools of thought, all evolving from the rich soil of village Hinduism Aum

### BHĀSHYA

At one end of Hinduism's complex spectrum is monism, *advaita*, which perceives a unity of God, soul and world, as in Śankara's acosmic pantheism and Kashmīr Śaiva monism At the other end is dualism, *dvaita*—exemplified by Mādhva and the early Pāśupatas—which teaches two or more separate realities In between are views describing reality as one and yet not one, *dvaita-advaita*, such as Rāmānuja's Vaishnava Vedānta and Śrīkantha's Śaiva Viśishtādvaita. Hindu philosophy consists of many schools of Vedic and Āgamic thought, including the six classical *darśanas*—Nyāya, Vaiśeṣika, Sāṅkhya, Yoga, Mīmāṃsā and Vedānta Each theology expresses the quest for God and is influenced by the myth, mystery and cultural syncretism of contemporary, tribal, shamanic Hinduism alive in every village in every age India also produced views, called *nāstika*, that reject the *Vedas* and are thus not part of Hinduism, such as Jainism, Sikhism, Buddhism and Chārvāka materialistic atheism The *Vedas* state, "Theologians ask What is the cause? Is it Brahman? Whence are we born? Whereby do we live? And on what are we established?" Aum Namah Śivāya





## How Do Monism and Dualism Differ?

### ŚLOKA 142

To most monists God is immanent, temporal, becoming. He is creation itself, material cause, but not efficient cause To most dualists, God is transcendent, eternal, Creator—efficient cause but not material cause Aum

### BHĀSHYA

To explain creation, philosophers speak of three kinds of causes efficient, instrumental and material These are likened to a potter's molding a pot from clay The potter, who makes the process happen, is the *efficient cause*. The wheel he uses to spin and mold the pot is the *instrumental cause*, thought of as God's power, or *śakti* The clay is the *material cause* Theistic dualists believe in God as Lord and Creator, but He remains ever separate from man and the world and is not the material cause. Among the notable dualists have been Kapila, Mādhva, Meykandar, Chaitanya, Aristotle, Augustine, Kant and virtually all Jewish, Christian and Muslim theologians The most prevalent monism is pantheism, "all is God," and its views do not permit of a God who is Lord and Creator He is immanent, temporal—material cause but not efficient cause History's pantheists include Śankara, Vivekānanda, Aurobindo, Plotinus, the Stoics, Spinoza and Aśvaghosha The *Vedas* proclaim, "As a thousand sparks from a fire well blazing spring forth, each one like the rest, so from the Imperishable all kinds of beings come forth, my dear, and to Him return" Aum Namah Śivāya



## Are Monism and Dualism Reconcilable?

### ŚLOKA 143

Monists, from their mountaintop perspective, perceive a one reality in all things. Dualists, from the foothills, see God, souls and world as eternally separate. Monistic theism is the perfect reconciliation of these two views Aum

### BHĀSHYA

Visualize a mountain and the path leading to its icy summit. As the climber traverses the lower ranges, he sees the meadows, the passes, the giant boulders. This we can liken to dualism, the natural, theistic state where God and man are different. Reaching the summit, the climber sees that the many parts are actually a one mountain. This realization is likened to pure monism. Unfortunately, many monists, reaching the summit, teach a denial of the foothills they themselves climbed on the way to their monistic platform. However, by going a little higher, lifting the *kundalinī* into the space above the mountain's peak, the entire Truth is known. The bottom and the top are viewed as a one whole, just as theism and monism are accepted by the awakened soul. Monistic theism, Advaita Īśvaravāda, reconciles the dichotomy of being and becoming, the apparent contradiction of God's eternality and temporal activity, the confusion of good and evil, the impasse of one and two. The *Vedas* affirm, "He who knows this becomes a knower of the One and of duality, he who has attained to the oneness of the One, to the self-same nature" Aum Namah Śivāya



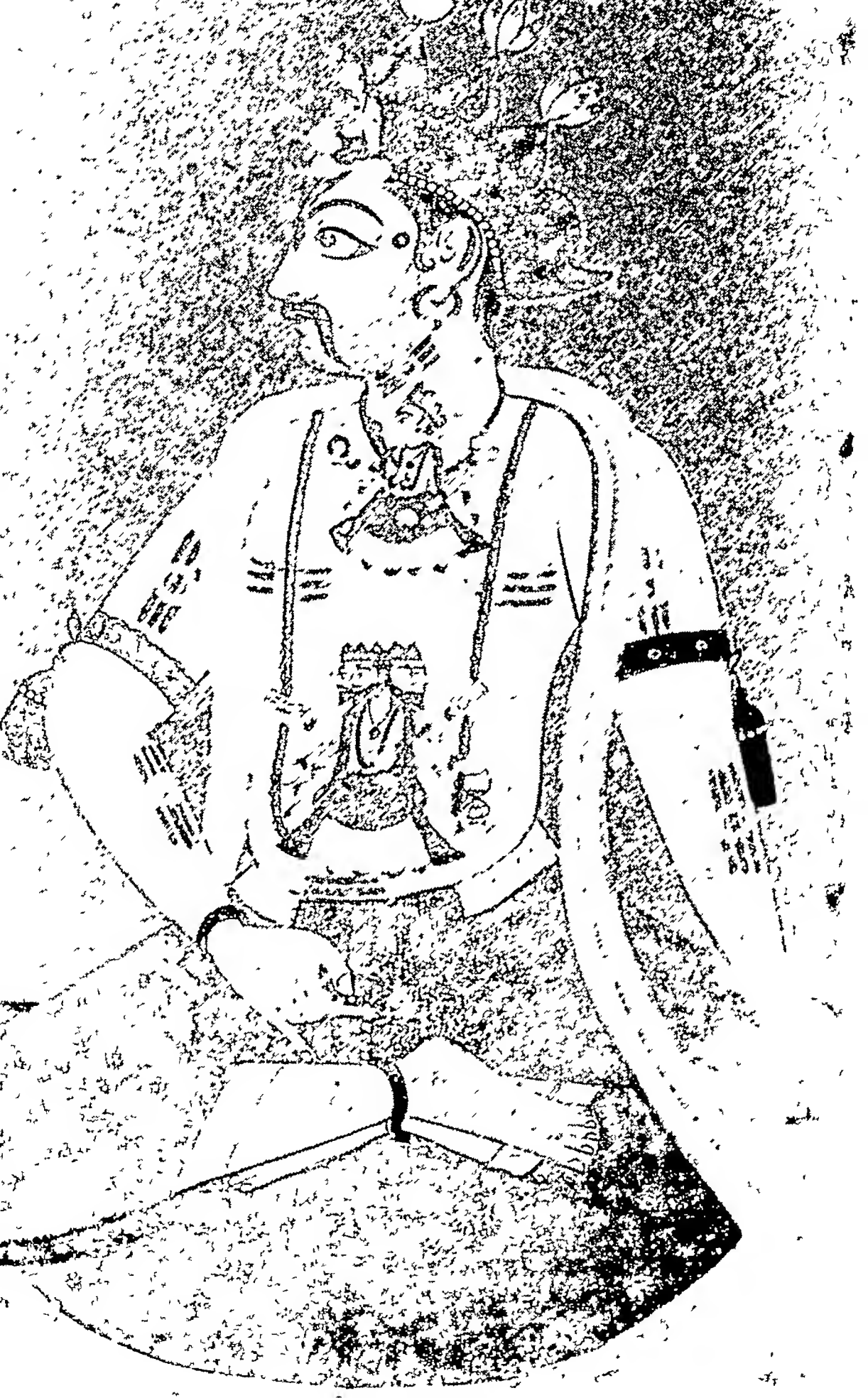
## Is Monistic Theism Found in the Vedas?

### ŚLOKA 145

Again and again in the *Vedas* and from *satgurus* we hear “Aham Brahmāsmi,” “I am God,” and that God is both immanent and transcendent. Taken together, these are clear statements of monistic theism. Aum Namah Śivāya

### BHĀSHYA

Monistic theism is the philosophy of the *Vedas*. Scholars have long noted that the Hindu scriptures are alternately monistic, describing the oneness of the individual soul and God, and theistic, describing the reality of the Personal God. One cannot read the *Vedas*, *Śaiva Āgamas* and hymns of the saints without being overwhelmed with theism as well as monism. Monistic theism is the essential teaching of Hinduism, of Śaivism. It is the conclusion of Tīrumular, Vasugupta, Gorakshanātha, Bhāskara, Śrīkantha, Basavanna, Vallabha, Rāmakrishna, Yogaswāmī, Nityānanda, Rādhākṛishnan and thousands of others. It encompasses both Siddhānta and Vedānta. It says, God is and is in all things. It propounds the hopeful, glorious, exultant concept that every soul will finally merge with Śiva in undifferentiated oneness, none left to suffer forever because of human transgression. The *Vedas* wisely proclaim, “Higher and other than the world-tree, time and forms is He from whom this expanse proceeds—the bringer of *dharma*, the remover of evil, the lord of prosperity. Know Him as in one’s own Self, as the immortal abode of all.” Aum Namah Śivāya



## What Is the View of Monistic Theism?

### ŚLOKA 144

Monistic theism is the synthesis of monism and dualism. It says God is transcendent and immanent, eternal and temporal, Being and becoming, Creator and created, Absolute and relative, efficient and material cause. Aum

### BHĀSHYA

Both strict monism and dualism are fatally flawed, for neither alone encompasses the whole of truth. In other words, it is not a choice between the *God-is-man-and-world* view of pantheistic monism and the *God-is-separate-from-man-and-world* view of theistic dualism. It is both. *Panentheism*, which describes “all in God, and God in all,” and monistic theism are Western terms for Advaita Īśvaravāda. It is the view that embraces the oneness of God and soul, monism, and the reality of the Personal God, theism. As panentheists, we believe in an eternal oneness of God and man at the level of Satchidānanda and Paraśiva. But a difference is acknowledged during the evolution of the soul body. Ultimately, even this difference merges in identity. Thus, there is perfectly beginningless oneness and a temporary difference which resolves itself in perfect identity. In the acceptance of this identity, monistic theists differ from most *viśiṣṭādvaitins*. The *Vedas* declare, “He moves and He moves not; He is far, yet is near. He is within all that is, yet is also outside. The man who sees all beings in the Self and the Self in all beings is free from all fear.” Aum Namah Śivāya





## Is Monistic Theism Found in the Vedas?

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## Scriptures Speak on One and Two

There is on earth no diversity. He gets death after death who perceives here seeming diversity. As a unity only is It to be looked upon—this indemonstrable, enduring Being, spotless, beyond space, the unborn Soul, great, enduring *Yajur Veda*

Contemplating Him who has neither beginning, middle, nor end—the One, the all-pervading, who is wisdom and bliss, the formless, the wonderful, whose consort is Ūmā, the highest Lord, the ruler; having three eyes and a blue throat, the peaceful—the silent sage reaches the source of Being, the universal witness, on the other shore of darkness *Atharva Veda*

Where there is duality, there one sees another, one smells another, one tastes another, one speaks to another, one hears another, one knows another. But where everything has become one's own Self, with what should one see whom, with what should one smell whom, with what should one taste whom, with what should one speak to whom, with what should one hear whom, with what should one think of whom, with what should one touch whom, with what should one know whom? How can He be known by whom all this is made known? *Yajur Veda*

When the Great Being is seen as both the higher and the lower, then the knot of the heart is rent asunder, all doubts are dispelled and *karma* is destroyed *Atharva Veda*

Than whom there is naught else higher, than whom there is naught smaller, naught greater, the One stands like a tree established in heaven. By Him, the Person, is this whole universe filled *Yajur Veda*

Even as water becomes one with water, fire with fire, and air with air, so the mind becomes one with the Infinite Mind and thus attains final freedom

*Yajur Veda*

One who is established in the contemplation of nondual unity will abide in the Self of everyone and realize the immanent, all-pervading One There is no doubt of this

*Sarvajñānottara Āgama*

O Six-Faced God! What is the use of putting it in so many words? Multiplicity of form exists only in the self, and the forms are externalized by the confused mind They are objectively created simultaneously with thoughts of them

*Sarvajñānottara Āgama*

The luminous Being of the perfect I-consciousness, inherent in the multitude of words, whose essence consists in the knowledge of the highest nondualism, is the secret of *mantra*

*Śiva Sūtras*

I sought Him in terms of I and you But He who knows not I from you taught me the truth that I indeed is you And now I talk not of I and you

*Tirumantiram*

Oh thou who pervades all space, both now and hereafter, as the Soul of souls! The *Vedas*, *Āgamas*, *Purāṇas*, *Itihāsas* and all other sciences inculcate fully the tenet of nonduality It is the inexplicable duality that leads to the knowledge of nonduality This is consonant with reason, experience, tradition, and is admitted by the dualists and nondualists

*Tayumanavar*

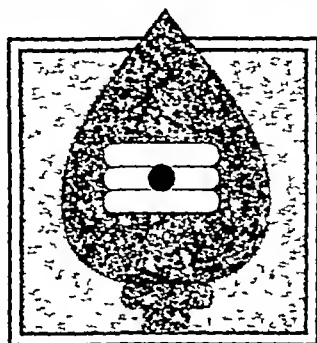
When the *Vedas* and *Āgamas* all proclaim that the whole world is filled with God and that there is nothing else, how can we say that the world exists and the body exists? Is there anything more worthy of reproach than to attribute an independent reality to them?

*Natchintanai*



Siddhānta Maṇḍala

सिद्धान्तमण्डल



## Views of Reality

*Vel*, the holy lance, is Lord Murugan's protective power, our safeguard in adversity. Its tip is wide, long and sharp, signifying incisive discrimination and spiritual knowledge, which must be broad, deep and penetrating. Aum.



## What Are Śaiva Siddhānta's Two Schools?

### ŚLOKA 146

There are two Śaiva Siddhānta schools. pluralistic theism, in the lines of Aghoraśiva and Meykandar, and Tirumular's monistic theism. While differing slightly, they share a religious heritage of belief, culture and practice Aum.

### BHĀSHYA

Here we compare the monistic Siddhānta of Rishi Tirumular that this catechism embodies and the pluralistic realism expounded by Meykandar and his disciples. They share far more in common than they hold in difference. In South India, their points of agreement are summarized as *guru*, preceptor, Linga, holy image of Śiva, *sanga*, fellowship of devotees, and *valipadu*, ritual worship. Both agree that God Śiva is the efficient cause of creation, and also that His Śakti is the instrumental cause. Their differences arise around the question of material cause, the nature of the original substance, whether it is one with or apart from God. They also differ on the identity of the soul and God, evil and final dissolution. While monistic theists, Advaita Īśvaravādins, view the 2,200-year-old *Tirumantiram* as Siddhānta's authority, pluralists, Anekavādins, rely mainly on the 800-year-old *Aghoraśiva Paddhatīs* and *Meykandar Śāstras*. The *Tirumantiram* inquires "Who can know the greatness of our Lord? Who can measure His length and breadth? He is the mighty nameless Flame of whose unknown beginnings I venture to speak" Aum Namah Śivāya





## What Are the Two Views on Creation?

### ŚLOKA 147

Monistic theists believe that Śiva creates the cosmos as an emanation of Himself. He is His creation. Pluralistic theists hold that Śiva molds eternally existing matter to fashion the cosmos and is thus not His creation. Aum

### BHĀSHYA

Pluralistic Siddhāntins hold that God, souls and world—*Paṭi*, *paśu* and *pāśa*—are three eternally coexistent realities. By creation, this school understands that Śiva fashions existing matter, *māyā*, into various forms. In other words, God, like a potter, is the efficient cause of the cosmos. But He is not the material cause, the “clay” from which the cosmos is formed. Pluralists hold that any reason for the creation of *pāśa*—*ānava*, *karma* and *māyā*—whether it be a divine desire, a demonstration of glory or merely a playful sport, makes the Creator less than perfect. Therefore, *pāśa* could never have been created. Monistic Siddhāntins totally reject the potter analogy. They teach that God is simultaneously the efficient, instrumental and material cause. Śiva is constantly emanating creation from Himself. His act of manifestation may be likened to heat issuing from a fire, a mountain from the earth or waves from the ocean. The heat is the fire, the mountain is the earth, the waves are not different from the ocean. The *Vedas* proclaim, “In That all this unites, from That all issues forth. He, omnipresent, is the warp and woof of all created things.” Aum Namah Śivāya



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# What Are the Views on God and Soul?

## ŚLOKA 148

For the monistic theist, the soul is an emanation of God Śiva and will merge back in Him as a river to the sea. For pluralists, God pervades but did not create the soul; thus, God and soul remain separate realities forever Aum.

## BHĀSHYA

Pluralistic Siddhāntins teach that Śiva pervades the soul, yet the soul is uncreated and exists eternally It is amorphous, but has the qualities of willing, thinking and acting. It does not wholly merge in Him at the end of its evolution Rather, it reaches His realm and enjoys the bliss of divine communion eternally Like salt dissolved in water, soul and God are not two, neither are they perfectly one For monistic Siddhāntins the soul emerges from God like a rain cloud drawn from the sea Like a river, the soul passes through many births. The soul consists of an uncreated divine essence and a beautiful, effulgent, human-like form created by Śiva. While this form—called the *ānandamaya kośa* or soul body—is maturing, it is distinct from God Even during this evolution, its essence, Satchidānanda and Paraśiva, is not different from Śiva Finally, like a river flowing into the sea, the soul returns to its source Soul and God are perfectly one The *Vedas* say, “Just as the flowing rivers disappear in the ocean, casting off name and shape, even so the knower, freed from name and shape, attains to the Primal Soul, higher than the high” Aum Namah Śivāya.



# What Are the Differing Views on Evil?

## ŚLOKA 149

For monistic theists, the world of *māyā* is Śiva's perfect creation, containing each thing and its opposite. For pluralistic theists, the world is tarnished with evil, thus *māyā* could not be the creation of a perfect God. Aum

## BHĀSHYA

Pluralistic Siddhāntins hold that the world of *māyā* is intrinsically evil and imperfect, for it is clearly full of sorrow, injustice, disease and death. The soul, too, is beginninglessly tainted with *ānava*, or limitation. Pluralists contend that if God had created *māyā*—the material of the world—or the soul, surely He would have made them flawless, and there would be no evil, for imperfection cannot arise out of Perfection. Therefore, they conclude that *ānava*, *karma* and *māyā* have always existed and the soul has been immersed in darkness and bondage without beginning. Monistic Siddhāntins hold that when viewed from higher consciousness, this world is seen as it truly is—perfect. There is no intrinsic evil. God Śiva has created the principle of opposites, which are the means for the soul's maturation—beauty and deformity, light and darkness, love and hate, joy and sorrow. All is God Śiva Himself, in Him and of Him. A perfect cosmos has issued forth from a perfect Creator. The *Tirumanti-ram* says, "All manifestations of nature are His grace. All animate and inanimate are His pure grace. As darkness, as light, the Lord's grace pervades." Aum Namah Śivāya





## What Are the Views on Mahāpralaya?

### ŚLOKA 150

Monistic theists hold that at *mahāpralaya*, cosmic dissolution, all creation is withdrawn into Śiva, and He alone exists. Pluralistic theists hold that world and souls persist in seed form and will later reemerge. Aum Namah Śivāya

### BHĀSHYA

Pluralistic Siddhāntins contend that after *mahāpralaya*—the withdrawal of time, form and space into Śiva—souls and world are so close to Śiva that, for all practical purposes, He alone exists. Actually, they say, both world and souls continue to exist, not as things, but as “potentialities.” As if in a deep sleep, souls, now in a bodiless state, rest. Individual *karmas* lie dormant to germinate later when creation again issues forth and nonliberated souls are re-embodied to continue their spiritual journey. Monistic Siddhāntins believe that souls persist through the lesser *pralayas* of the cosmic cycle, but hold that only Śiva exists following *mahāpralaya*. There is no “other,” no separate souls, no separate world. The universe and all souls are absorbed in Śiva. *Pāśa—ānava, karma* and *māyā*—is annihilated. In the intensity of pre-dissolution, when time itself is accelerated, all souls attain complete maturation, losing separateness through fulfilled merger with Śiva. Yea, *jīva* becomes Śiva. The *Vedas* boldly decree, “By His divine power He holds dominion over all the worlds. At the periods of creation and dissolution of the universe, He alone exists.” Aum Namah Śivāya

## Scriptures Speak on Siddhānta

Meditate on the Lord as the object of meditation, for by the Lord the whole world is set to activity. Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Rudra and Indra have been brought forth by Him, similarly, all faculties along with creatures. His divine majesty has become the Cause, the Universe, the Blissful, as the ether standing unshaken in the mid-air.

*Atharva Veda*

Whoever has found and has awakened to the Self that has entered into this perilous inaccessible place, the body, he is the maker of the universe, for he is the maker of all. His is the world. Indeed, he is the world itself.

*Yajur Veda*

All the sacred books, all holy sacrifice and ritual and prayers, all the words of the *Vedas*, and the whole past and present and future, come from the Spirit. With *māyā*, His power of wonder, He made all things, and by *māyā* the human soul is bound. Know, therefore, that nature is *māyā*, but that God is the ruler of *māyā*, and that all beings in our universe are parts of His infinite splendor.

*Yajur Veda*

For the sake of experiencing the true and the false, the great Self has a dual nature. Yea, the great Self has a dual nature. Yea, the great Self has a dual nature!

*Yajur Veda*

The seer sees not death, nor sickness, nor any distress. The seer sees only the All, obtains the All entirely.

*Yajur Veda*

Inconceivable is this supreme *ātman*, immeasurable, unborn, inscrutable, unthinkable, He whose Self is infinite space. He alone remains awake when the universe is dissolved, and out of this space He awakens the world consisting of thought.

*Yajur Veda*

That intelligence which incites the functions into the paths of virtue or vice am I All this universe, moveable and immoveable, is from Me All things are preserved by Me All are absorbed into Me at the time of *pralaya* Because there exists nothing but Spirit, and I am that Spirit, there exists nothing else *Śiva Samhitā*

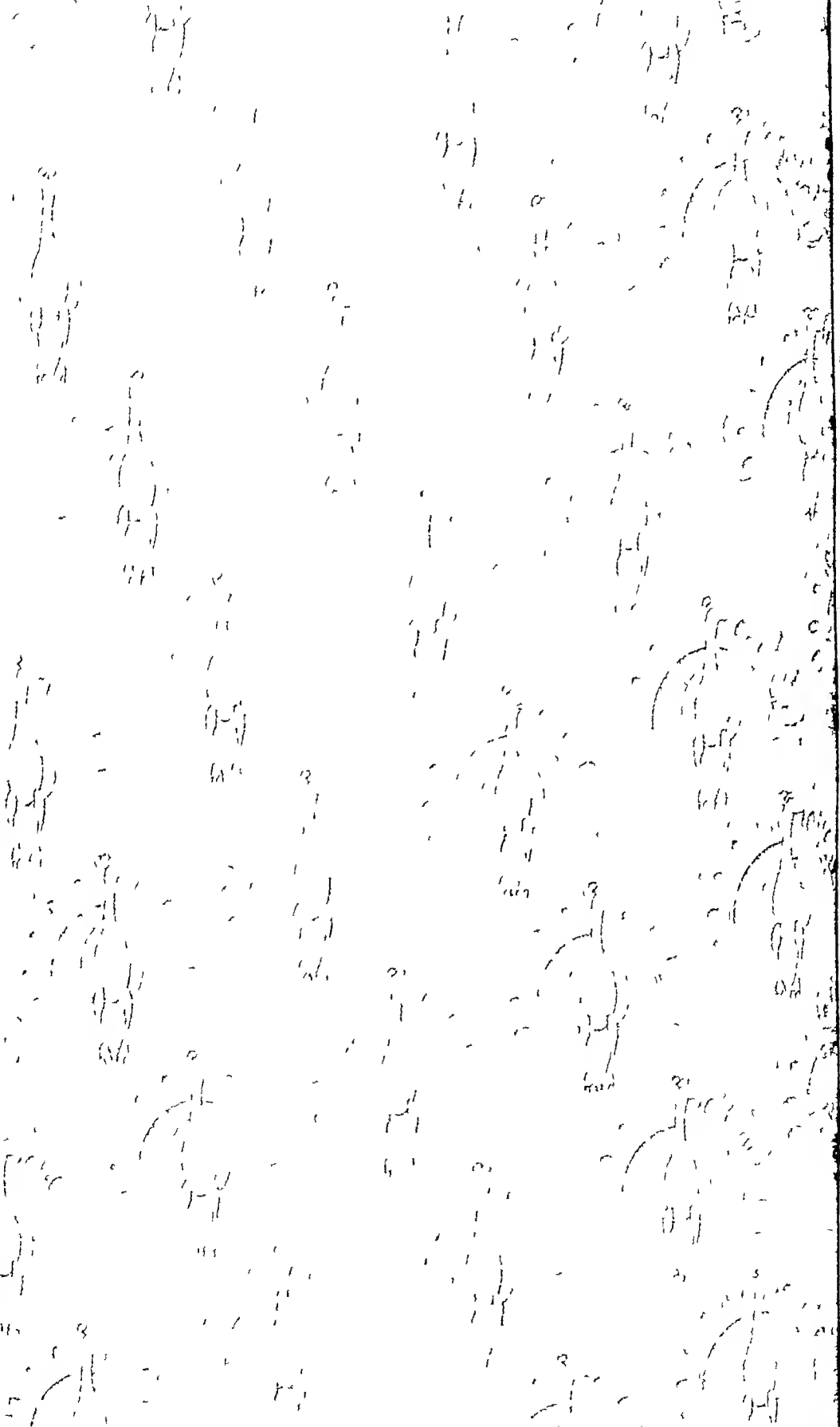
The Primal One, the indivisible great, Himself into several divided As form, formless and form-formless, and as *guru* and as Śakti's Lord In forms numerous He immanent in *jīvas* became *Tirumantiram*

You and He are not two separate, you and He are but one united, thus do you stand, freed of all sectarian shackles, adore the Feet of Paraparai and with Śiva become One—that the way Siddhānta fulfills *Tirumantiram*

It is the Primal One without past or future Its form is free from age and sickness It manifests as father and mother It blossoms as the Self-Existent It cannot be described as one or two No artist can portray It It is that which lies 'twixt good and evil It ever abides in the hearts of the wise It permits no distinction between Vedānta and Siddhānta It is That which dances at the zenith beyond the realm of sound *Natchintanai*

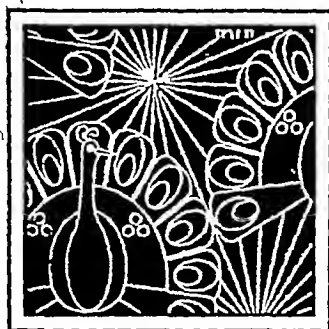
Always my action is your action I am not other than you, because the essence of myself which I call "I" does not exist apart from you Herein lies the natural harmony between Vedānta and Siddhānta *Tayumanavar*

As wide earth, as fire and water, as sacrificer and wind that blows, as eternal moon and sun, as ether, as the eight-formed God, as cosmic good and evil, woman and man, all other forms and His own form, and all these as Himself, as yesterday and today and tomorrow, the God of the long, red hair stands, O Wonder! *Tirumurai*



Sampradāya Upanishad

संप्रदाय उपनिषद्

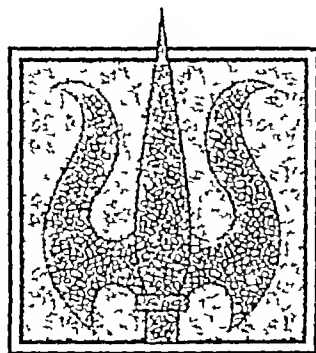


**Passing on the Power**



Kailāsa Paramparā Maṇḍala

कैलासपरंपरामण्डल



## Himalayan Lineage

*Trisūla*, Śiva's trident carried by Himalayan *yogīs*, is the royal scepter of the Śaiva Dharma. Its triple prongs betoken desire, action and wisdom, *idā*, *pingalā* and *su-shumnā*, and the *gunas*—*sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. Aum





## What Is Hinduism's Nātha Sampradāya?

### ŚLOKA 151

The Nātha Sampradāya, “the masters’ way,” is the mystical fountainhead of Śaivism. The divine message of the eternal truths and how to succeed on the path to enlightenment are locked within the Nātha tradition. Aum

### BHĀSHYA

*Nātha* means “lord or adept,” and *sampradāya* refers to a living theological tradition. The roots of this venerable heritage stretch back beyond recorded history, when awakened Nātha mystics worshiped the Lord of lords, Śiva, and in *yogic* contemplation experienced their identity in Him. The Nātha Sampradāya has revealed the search for the innermost divine Self, balanced by temple worship, fueled by *kundalinī yoga*, charted by monistic theism, illumined by a potent *guru-śishya* system, guided by soul-stirring scriptures and awakened by *sādhana* and *tapas*. Thus has it given mankind the mechanics for moving forward in evolution. Today two main Nātha streams are well known: the Nandinātha Sampradāya, made famous by Maharishi Nandinātha (ca. 250 BCE), and the Ādinātha Sampradāya, carried forth by Siddha Yogī Gorakshanātha (ca. 900). Yea, there is infinitely more to know of the mysterious Nāthas. The *Tirumantiram* states, “My peerless *satguru*, Nandinātha, of Śaivism honored high, showed us a holy path for soul’s redemption. It is Śiva’s divine path, San Mārga, for all the world to tread and forever be free.” Aum Namah Śivāya



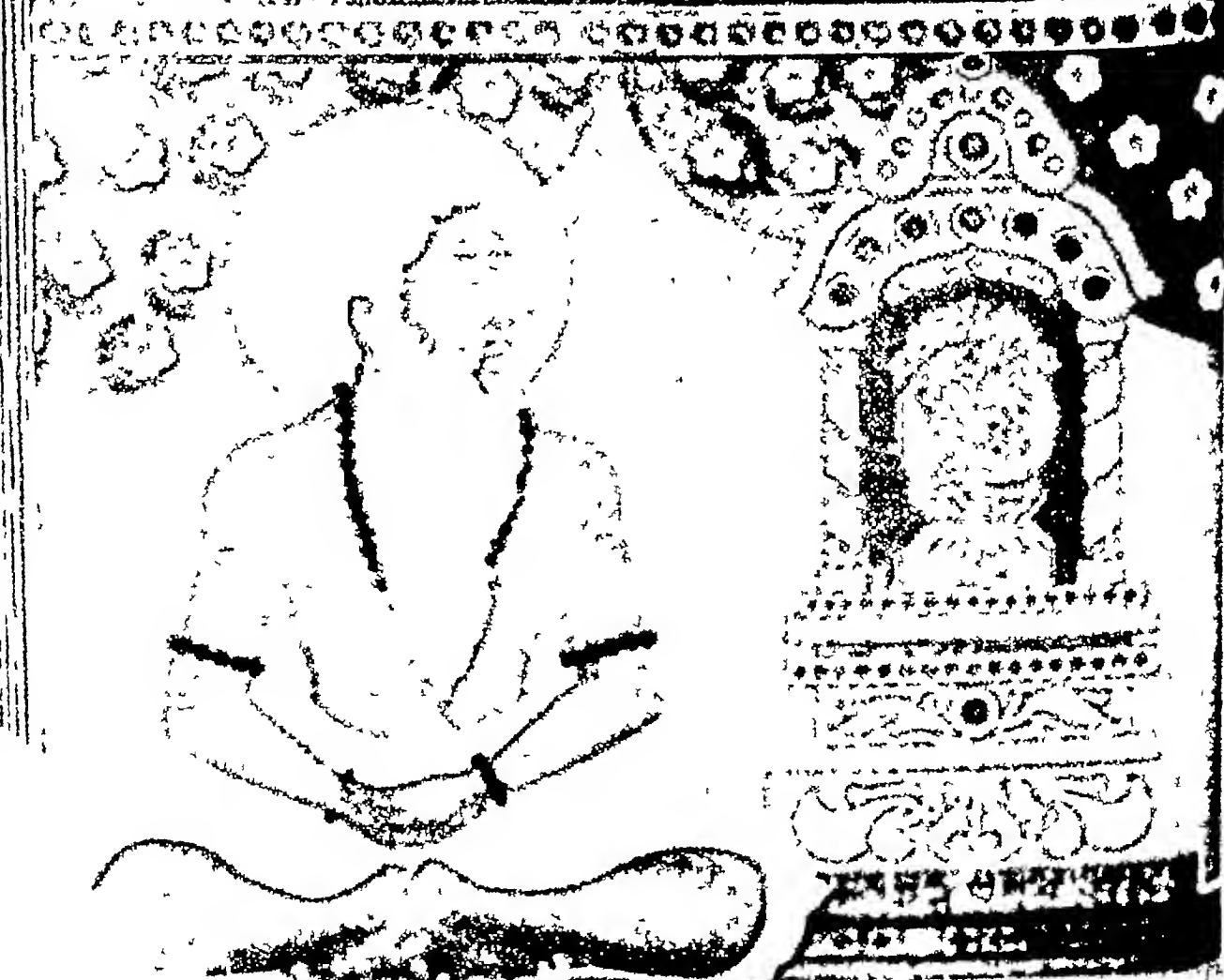
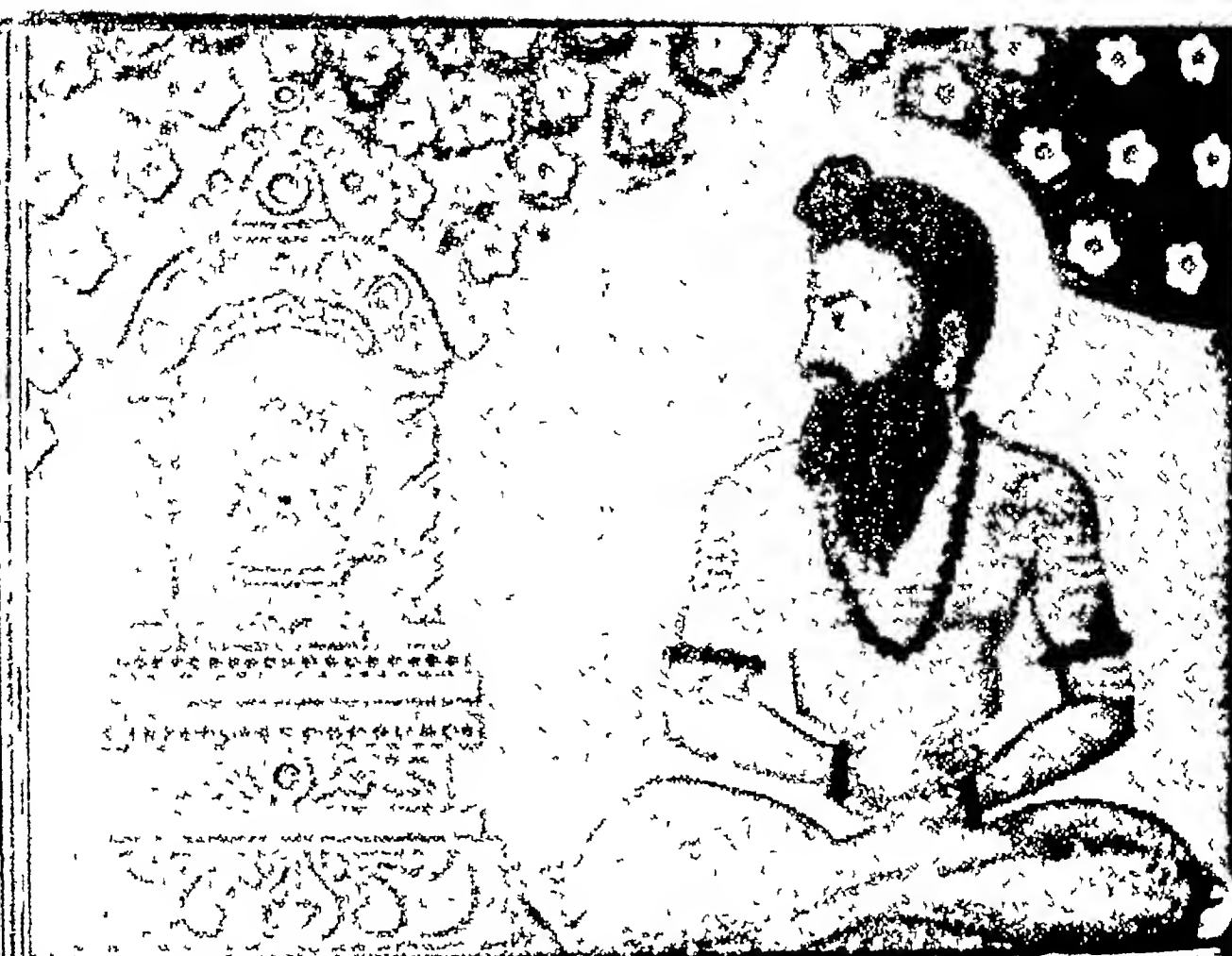
## What Is the Lofty Kailāsa Paramparā?

### ŚLOKA 152

The Kailāsa Paramparā is a millennia-old *guru* lineage of the Nandinātha Sampradāya. In this century it was embodied by Sage Yogaswāmī, who ordained me in Sri Lanka in 1949 to carry on the venerable tradition. Aum

### BHĀSHYA

The authenticity of Hindu teachings is perpetuated by lineages, *paramparā*, passed from *gurus* to their successors through ordination. The Kailāsa Paramparā extends back to, and far beyond, Maharishi Nandinātha and his eight disciples—Sanatkumāra, Sanakar, Sanadanar, Sananthanar, Śivayogamuni, Patañjali, Vyāgrapāda and Tirumular. This succession of *siddha yoga* adepts flourishes today in many streams, most notably in the Śaiva Siddhānta of South India. Our branch of this *paramparā* is the line of Rishi Tirumular (ca 200 BCE), of which the first known *satguru* in recent history was the Rishi from the Himalayas (ca 1770–1840). From him the power was passed to Siddha Kadaitswāmī of Bangalore (ca 1810–1875), then to Satguru Chellappāsawāmī (1840–1915), then to Sage Yogaswāmī (1872–1964) of Sri Lanka, and finally to myself, Sivaya Subramuniyaswami (1927–). The *Tirumantiram* states, “Thus expounding, I bore His word down Kailāsa’s unchanging path—the word of Him, the eternal, the truth effulgent, the limitless great, Nandinātha, the joyous one, He of the blissful dance that all impurity dispels” Aum Namah Śivāya



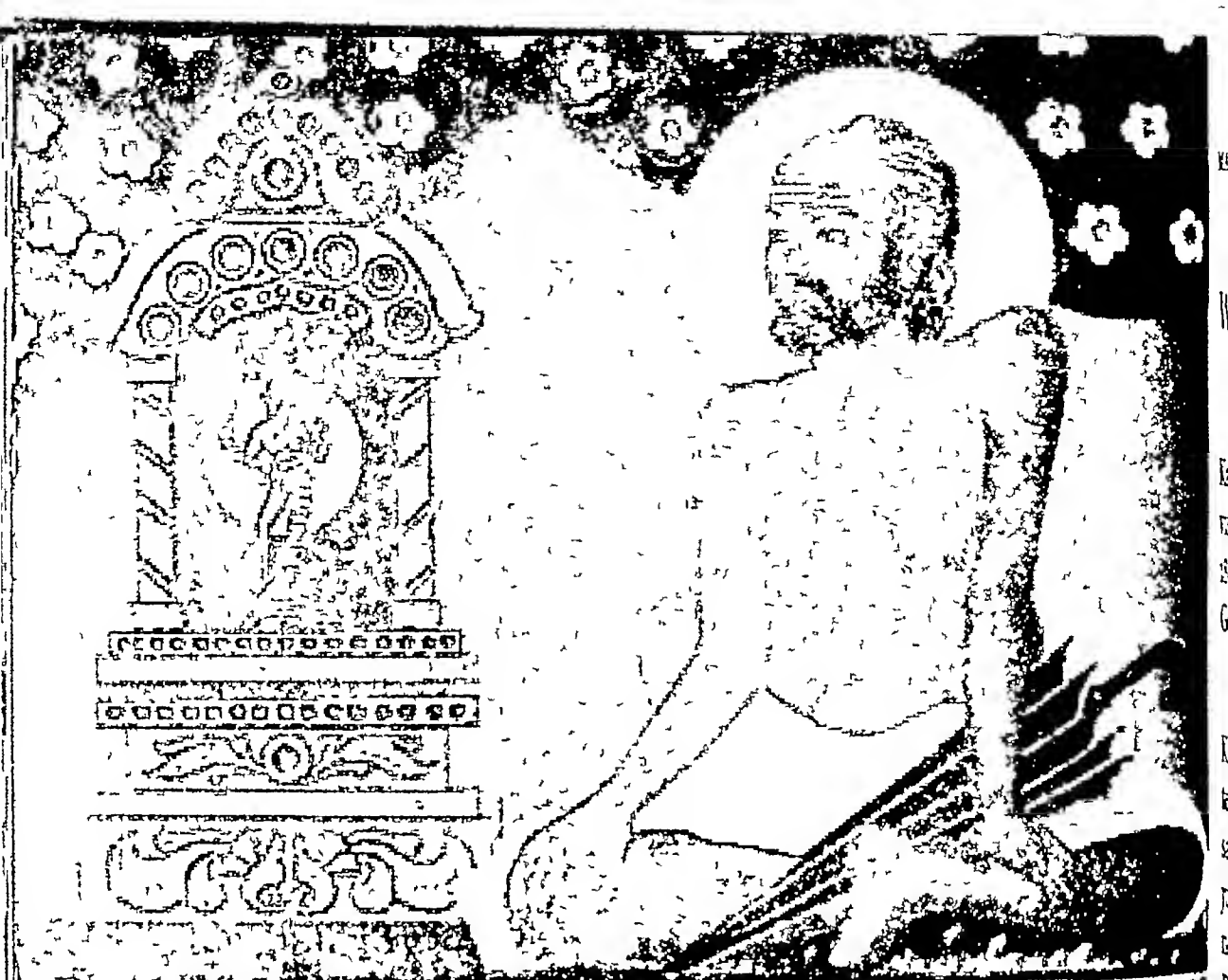
## Who Were the Early Kailāsa Preceptors?

### ŚLOKA 153

Among its ancient *gurus*, the Kailāsa Paramparā honors the illustrious Ṛishi Tirumular and his generations of successors. In recent history we especially revere the silent *siddha* called “Ṛishi from the Himalayas” Aum

### BHĀSHYA

Having achieved perfect enlightenment and the eight *siddhis* at the feet of Maharishi Nandinātha in the Himalayas, Ṛishi Tirumular was sent by his *satguru* to revive Śaiva Siddhānta in the South of India. Finally, he reached Tiruvavaduthurai, where, in the Tamil language, he recorded the truths of the Śaiva Āgamas and the precious *Vedas* in the *Tirumantiram*, a book of over 3,000 esoteric verses. Through the centuries, the Kailāsa mantle was passed from one *siddha yogī* to the next. Among these luminaries was the nameless Ṛishi from the Himalayas, who in the 1700s entered a teashop in a village near Bangalore, sat down and entered into deep *samādhi*. He did not move for seven years, nor did he speak. Streams of devotees came for his *darśana*. Their unspoken prayers and questions were mysteriously answered in dreams or in written, paper messages that manifested in the air and floated down. Then one day Ṛishi left the village, later to pass his power to Kadaitswāmī. The *Tirumantiram* expounds, “With Nandi’s grace I sought the primal cause. With Nandi’s grace I Sadāśiva became. With Nandi’s grace truth divine I attained.” Aum Namah Śivāya



## Who Were Kadaitswāmī and Chellappan?

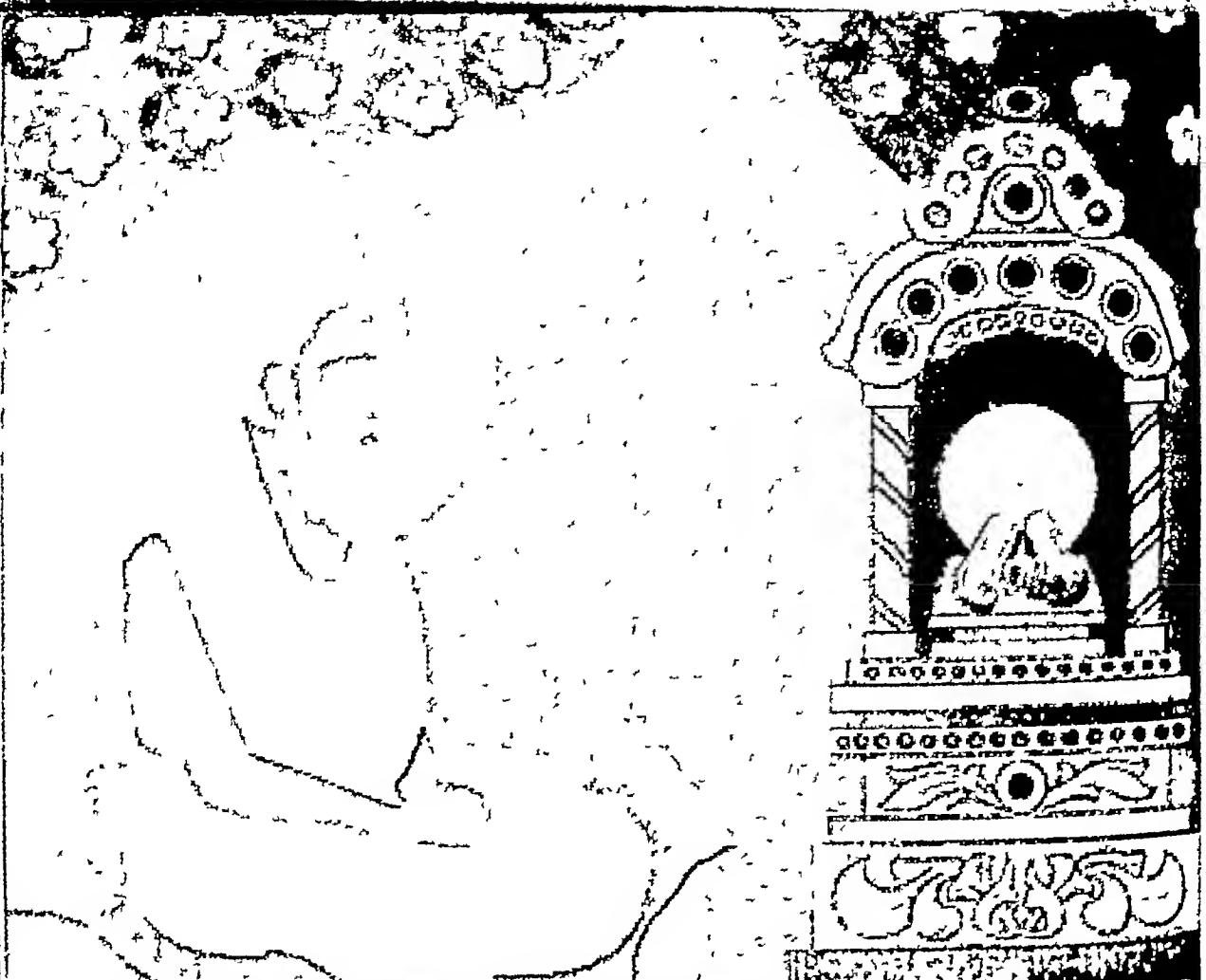
### ŚLOKA 154

Kadaitswāmī was a dynamic *satguru* who revived Śaivism in Catholic-dominated Jaffna, Sri Lanka, in the 1800s Chellappaswāmī was an ardent sage, ablaze with God consciousness, immersed in divine soliloquy Aum.

### BHĀSHYA

Kadaitswāmī was a powerful *siddha*, standing two meters tall, whose fiery marketplace talks converted thousands back to Śaivism It is said he was a high court judge who refused to confer the death penalty and renounced his career at middle age to become a *sannyāsin* Directed by his *satguru* to be a worker of miracles, he performed *siddhis* that are talked about to this day—turning iron to gold, drinking molten wax, disappearing and appearing elsewhere Chellappaswāmī, initiated at age nineteen, lived alone in the *teradī* at Nallur temple Absorbed in the inner Self, recognizing no duality, he uttered *advaitic* axioms in constant refrain “There is no intrinsic evil It was all finished long ago All that is, is Truth We know not!” The *Natchintanai* says, “Laughing, Chellappan roams in Nallur’s precincts Appearing like a man possessed, he scorns all outward show Dark is his body, his only garment, rags Now all my sins have gone, for he has burnt them up! Always repeating something softly to himself, he will impart the blessing of true life to anyone who ventures to come near him And he has made a temple of my mind” Aum Namah Śivāya





## Who Are the Most Recent Kailāsa Gurus?

### ŚLOKA 155

Sage Yogaswāmī, source of *Natchintanaī*, protector of *dharma*, was *satguru* of Sri Lanka for half a century. He ordained me with a slap on the back, commanding, “Go round the world and roar like a lion!” Aum Namah Śivāya

### BHĀSHYA

Amid a festival crowd outside Nallur temple, a disheveled *sādhū* shook the bars from within the chariot shed, shouting, “Hey! Who are you?” and in that moment Yogaswāmī was transfixed “There is not one wrong thing!” “It is as it is! Who knows?” Sage Chellappan said, and suddenly the world vanished After Chellappan’s *mahāsamādhi* in 1915, Yogaswāmī undertook five years of intense *sādhana* Later, people of all walks of life, all nations, came for his *darśana* He urged one and all to “Know thy Self by thyself” It was in his thatched, dung-floor hermitage in 1949 that we first met I had just weeks before realized *Paraśiva* with his inner help while meditating in the caves of Jalani “You are in me,” he said “I am in you,” I responded. Later he ordained me “Subramuniyaswami” with a tremendous slap on the back, and with this *dīkshā* sent me as a *sannyāsin* to America, saying, “You will build temples You will feed thousands.” I was 22 at the time, and he was 77 In fulfillment of his orders have I, Sivaya Subramuniyaswami, composed these 155 *ślokas* and *bhāshyas*, telling an infinitesimal fraction of all that he infused in me. Aum Namah Śivāya.

## Scriptures Speak on Paramparā

There is no one greater in the three worlds than the *guru*. It is he who grants divine knowledge and should be worshiped with supreme devotion *Atharva Veda*

Abiding in the midst of ignorance, but thinking themselves wise and learned, fools aimlessly go hither and thither, like blind led by the blind *Atharva Veda*

Truth is the Supreme, the Supreme is Truth. Through Truth men never fall from the heavenly world, because Truth belongs to the saints. Therefore, they rejoice in Truth *Yajur Veda*

The supreme mystery in the *Veda's* end, which has been declared in former times, should not be given to one not tranquil, nor again to one who is not a son or a pupil. To one who has the highest devotion for God, and for his spiritual teacher even as for God, to him these matters which have been declared become manifest if he be a great soul—yea, become manifest if he be a great soul! *Yajur Veda*

Disciples get, by devotion to the *guru*, the knowledge which the *guru* possesses. In the three worlds this fact is clearly enunciated by divine sages, the ancestors and learned men *Guru Gītā*

It is laid down by the Lord that there can be no *moksha*, liberation, without *dīkshā*, initiation, and initiation cannot be there without a teacher. Hence, it comes down the line of teachers, *paramparā* *Kulārṇava Tantra*

Though himself unattached, the *guru*, after testing him for some time, on command of the Lord, shall deliver the Truth to his disciple in order to vest him with authority. Of him who is so invested with authority, there is verily union with the Supreme Śiva. At the termination of the bodily life, his is the eternal liberation—this is declared by the Lord. Therefore, one should seek with all effort to have a *guru* of the unbroken tradition, born of Supreme Śiva himself.

*Kulārnava Tantra*

Without a teacher, all philosophy, traditional knowledge and *mantras* are fruitless. Him alone the Gods laud who is the *guru*, keeping active what is handed down by tradition.

*Kulārnava Tantra*

I adore the lotus feet of the teachers who have shown to us the source of the eternal ocean of bliss, born of the Self within, who have given us the remedy for the *hala-hala* poison of *samsāra*.

*Guru Gītā*

Night and day in Nallur's precincts, Chellappan danced in bliss. Even holy *yogīs* merged in silence do not know him. He keeps repeating, "All is truth," with radiant countenance. Night and day in Nallur's precincts, Chellappan danced in bliss.

*Natchintanai*

Seek the Nāthas who Nandinātha's grace received. First the *ṛishis* four, Śivayoga the holy next, then Patañjali, who in Sabhā's holy precincts worshiped Vyāghra and I complete the number eight.

*Tirumantiram*

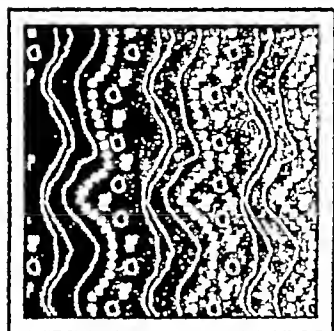
Nandinātha accepted the offering of my body, wealth and life. He then touched me, and his glance dispelled my distressful *karma*. He placed his feet on my head and imparted higher consciousness. Thus, he severed my burdensome cycle of birth.

*Tirumantiram*



Upagrantha

उपग्रन्थ

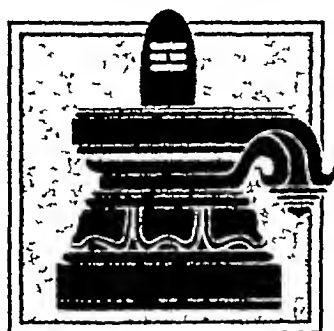


Resources



Śaiva Śraddhādhāraṇā

शैवश्रद्धाधारणा



## A Śaivite Creed

*Śivaliṅga* is the ancient mark or symbol of God. This elliptical stone is a formless form betokening Paraśiva, That which can never be described or portrayed. The *pīṭha*, pedestal, represents Śiva's manifest Parāśakti. Aum

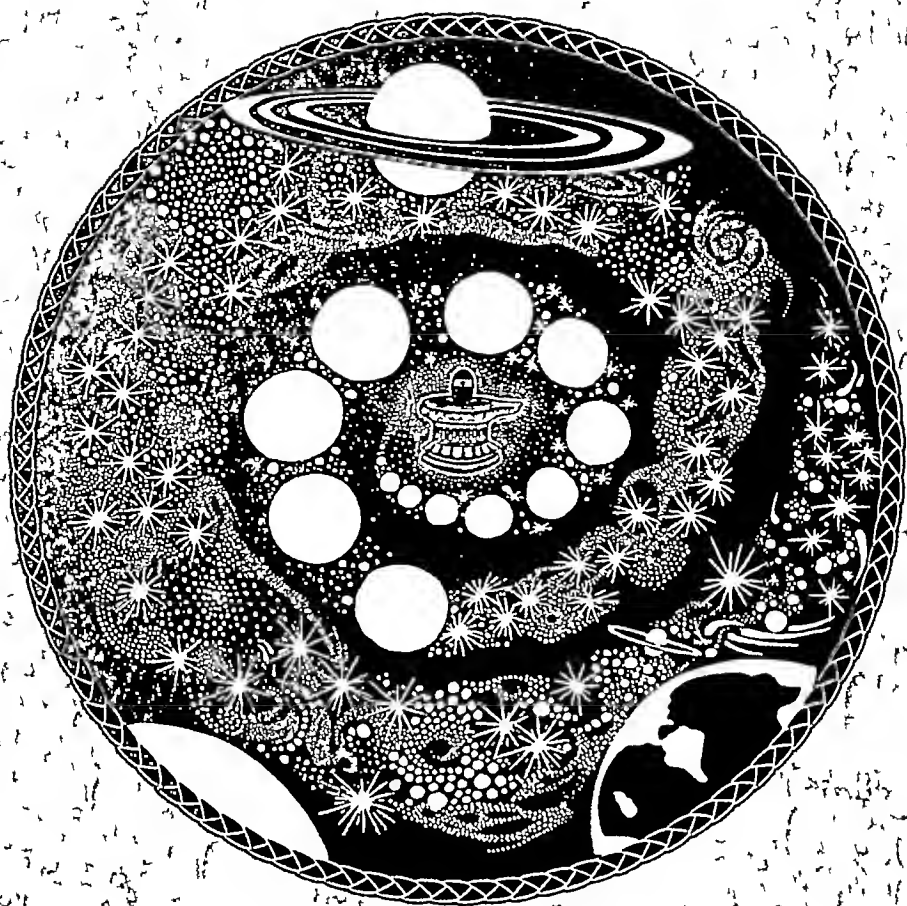




## A Śaivite Creed

EVERY RELIGION HAS A CREED OF ONE FORM OR ANOTHER, AN AUTHORITATIVE FORMULATION OF ITS BELIEFS. HISTORICALLY, CREEDS HAVE developed whenever religions migrate from their homelands. Until then, the beliefs are fully contained in the culture and taught to children as a natural part of growing up. But when followers settle in other countries where alien faiths predominate, the importance of a simple statement of faith arises. A creed is the distillation of volumes of knowledge into a series of easy-to-remember beliefs, or *śraddhā*. A creed is meant to summarize the specific teachings or articles of faith, to imbed and thus protect and transmit the beliefs. Creeds give strength to individuals seeking to understand life and religion. Creeds also allow members of one faith to express, in elementary and consistent terms, their traditions to members of another.

Though the vast array of doctrines within the Sanātana Dharma has not always been articulated in summary form, from ancient times unto today we have the well-known creedal *mahāvākya*, “great sayings,” of the Vedic *Upanishads*. Now, in this technological age in which village integrity is being replaced by worldwide mobility, the importance of a creed becomes apparent if religious identity is to be preserved. We need two kinds of strength—that which is found in diversity and individual freedom to inquire and that which derives from a union of minds in upholding the universal principles of our faith. The twelve beliefs on the following pages embody the centuries-old central convictions of Śaivism, especially as postulated in the Advaita Išvara-vāda philosophy of Śaiva Siddhānta. Yea, this *Śaiva Dharma Śraddhādhāranā* is a total summation of *Dancing with Śiva, Hinduism’s Contemporary Catechism*. Aum Namah Śivaya



## Belief Number One

### REGARDING GOD'S UNMANIFEST REALITY

Śiva's followers all believe that Lord Śiva is God, whose Absolute Being, Paraśiva, transcends time, form and space. The *yogī* silently exclaims, "It is not this. It is not that" Yea, such an inscrutable God is God Śiva Aum



## Belief Number Two

REGARDING GOD'S MANIFEST NATURE OF ALL-PERVADING LOVE

Śiva's followers all believe that Lord Śiva is God, whose immanent nature of love, Parāśakti, is the substratum, primal substance or pure consciousness flowing through all form as energy, existence, knowledge and bliss. Aum

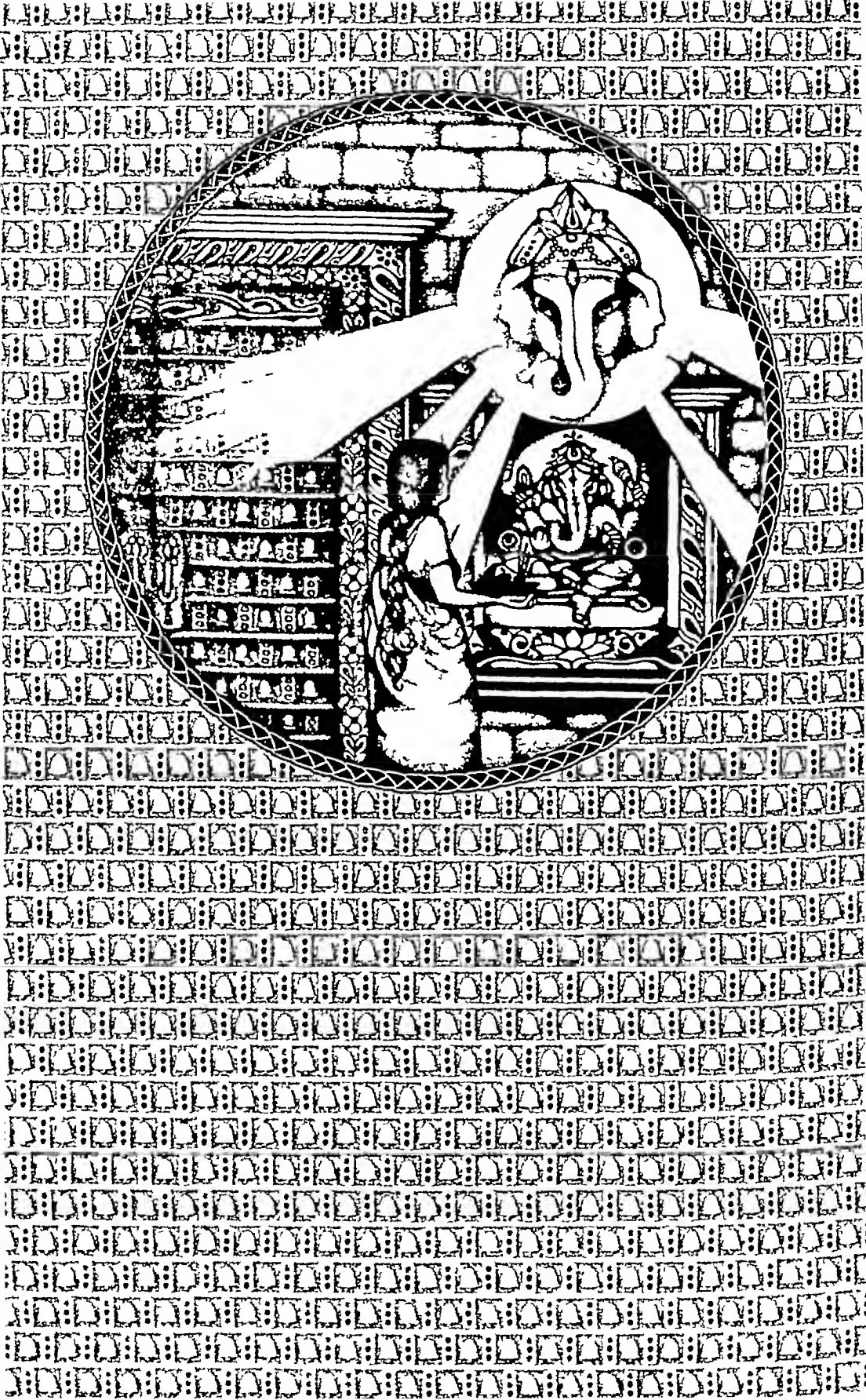


## Belief Number Three

REGARDING GOD AS PERSONAL LORD AND CREATOR OF ALL

Śiva's followers all believe that Lord Śiva is God, whose immanent nature is the Primal Soul, Supreme Mahādeva, Parameśvara, author of *Vedas* and *Āgamas*, the creator, preserver and destroyer of all that exists. Aum





## Belief Number Four

### REGARDING THE ELEPHANT-FACED DEITY

Śiva's followers all believe in the Mahādeva Lord Ga-  
neśa, son of Śiva-Śakti, to whom they must first suppli-  
cate before beginning any worship or task. His rule is  
compassionate His law is just Justice is His mind. Aum.



## Belief Number Five

REGARDING THE DLITY KĀRTTIKEYA

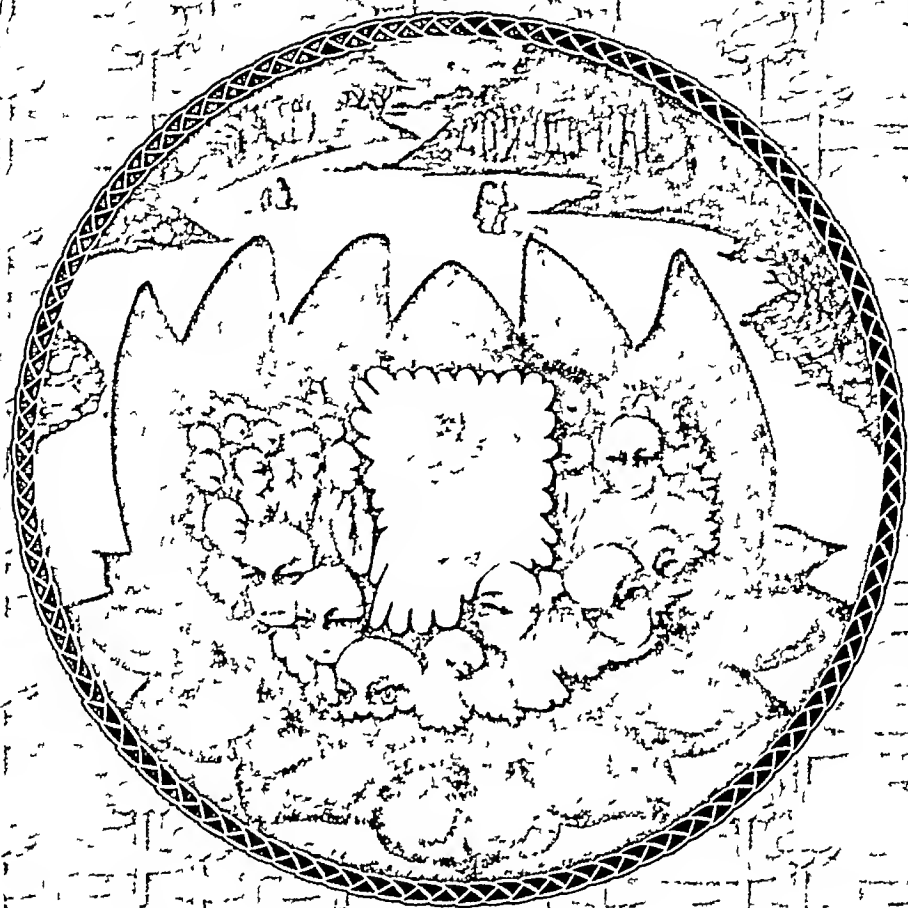
Śiva's followers all believe in the Mahādeva Kārttikeya, son of Śiva-Śakti, whose *vel* of grace dissolves the bondages of ignorance. The *yogī*, locked in lotus, venerates Murugan. Thus restrained, his mind becomes calm. Aum



## Belief Number Six

REGARDING THE SOUL'S CREATION AND ITS IDENTITY WITH GOD

Śiva's followers all believe that each soul is created by Lord Śiva and is identical to Him, and that this identity will be fully realized by all souls when the bondage of *ānava*, *karma* and *māyā* is removed by His grace Aum



## Belief Number Seven

REGARDING THE GROSS, SUBTLE AND CAUSAL PLANES OF EXISTENCE

Śiva's followers all believe in three worlds of existence the Bhūloka, where souls take on physical bodies; the Antarloka, where souls take on astral bodies, and the Śivaloka, where souls exist in their self-effulgent form. Aum





## Belief Number Eight

REGARDING KARMA, SAMŚĀRA AND LIBERATION FROM REBIRTH

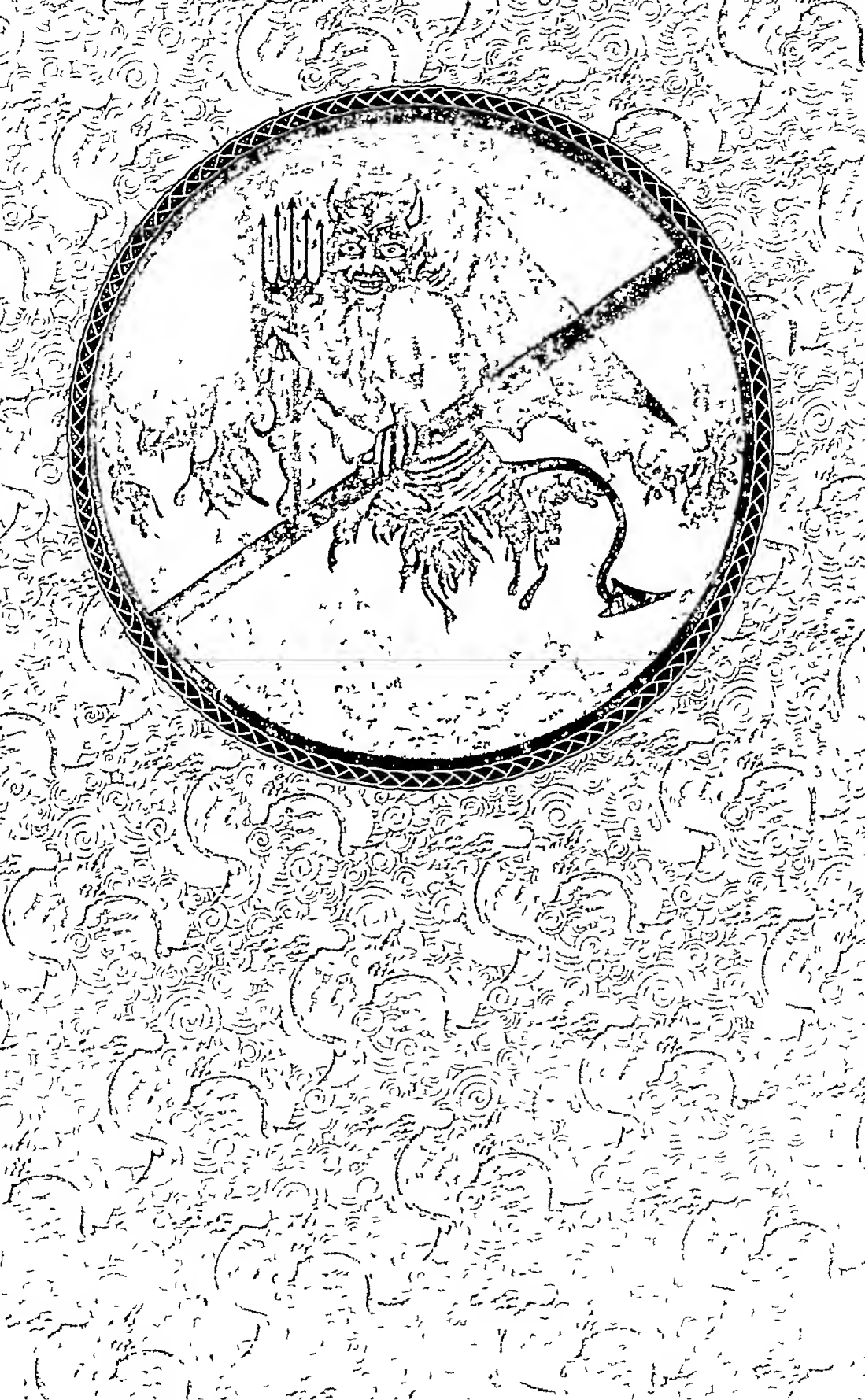
Śiva's followers all believe in the law of *karma*—that one must reap the effects of all actions he has caused—and that each soul continues to reincarnate until all *karmas* are resolved and *moksha*, liberation, is attained. Aum



## Belief Number Nine

REGARDING THE FOUR MĀRGAS, OR STAGES OF INNER PROGRESS

Śiva's followers all believe that the performance of *charyā*, virtuous living, *kriyā*, temple worship, and *yoga*, leading to Paraśiva through the grace of the living *satguru*, is absolutely necessary to bring forth *jñāna*, wisdom Aum.



## Belief Number Ten

### REGARDING THE GOODNESS OF ALL

Śiva's followers all believe there is no intrinsic evil. Evil has no source, unless the source of evil's seeming be ignorance itself. They are truly compassionate, knowing that ultimately there is no good or bad. All is Śiva's will. Aum.



## Belief Number Eleven

REGARDING THE ESOTERIC PURPOSE OF TEMPLE WORSHIP

Śiva's followers all believe that religion is the harmonious working together of the three worlds and that this harmony can be created through temple worship, wherein the beings of all three worlds can communicate Aum





## Belief Number Twelve

### REGARDING THE FIVE LETTERS

Śiva's followers all believe in the Pañchākshara Mantra, the five sacred syllables "Namah Śivāya," as Śaivism's foremost and essential mantra. The secret of Namah Śivāya is to hear it from the right lips at the right time Aum



Shatśaiva Sampradāya

षट्शैवसंप्रदाय



## Six Schools of Śaivism

*Nāga*, the cobra, is a symbol of *kundalinī* power, cosmic energy coiled and slumbering within man. It inspires seekers to overcome misdeeds and suffering by lifting the serpent power up the spine into God Realization. Aum



## Six Schools of Śaivism

**I**N THE SEARCH FOR PEACE, ENLIGHTENMENT AND LIBERATION, NO PATH IS MORE TOLERANT, MORE MYSTICAL, MORE WIDESPREAD OR MORE ancient than Śaivite Hinduism. Through history Śaivism has developed a vast array of lineages and traditions, each with unique philosophic-cultural-linguistic characteristics, as it dominated India prior to 1100 from the Himalayas to Sri Lanka, from the Bay of Bengal to the Arabian Sea. Here we seek to present the essential features of six major traditions identifiable within the ongoing Śaiva context: Śaiva Siddhānta, Pāśupata Śaivism, Kāśmīr Śaivism, Vīra Śaivism, Siddha Siddhānta and Śiva Advaita.

It should be understood that this formal and somewhat intellectual division, however useful, is by no means a comprehensive description of Śaivism, nor is it the only possible list. In practice, Śaivism is far more rich and varied than these divisions imply. Take for instance the Śaivism practiced by thirteen million people in Nepal or three million in Indonesia and fifty-five million Hinduized Javanese who worship Śiva as Batara. Ponder the millions upon millions of Smārtas and other universalists who have taken Gaṇeśa, Murugaṇ or Śiva as their chosen Deity, or the legions of Ayyappaṇ followers who worship devoutly in Lord Murugaṇ's great South Indian sanctuaries. Consider the fact that only a handful of Kāśmīr's millions of Śiva worshipers would formally associate themselves with the school called Kāśmīr Śaivism. Similarly, in the Indian state of Tamil Nadu, where there are over fifty million worshipers of Śiva, only a well-informed minority would knowingly subscribe to Śaiva Siddhānta.

Our discussion of these six schools and their related traditions is based upon historical information. There are wide

gaps in the record, but we do know that at each point in which the veil of history lifts, the worship of Śiva is there. In the 8,000-year-old Indus Valley we find the famous seal of Śiva as Lord Paśupati. The seal shows Śiva seated in a *yogic* pose. In the *Rāmāyana*, dated astronomically at 2000 BCE, Lord Rāma worshiped Śiva, as did his rival Rāvana. In the *Mahābhārata*, dated at around 1300 BCE we find again the worship of Śiva. Buddha in 624 BCE was born into a Śaivite family, and records of his time talk of the Śaiva ascetics who wandered the hills looking much as they do today.

The *Śaiva Āgamas* form the foundation and circumference of all the schools of Śaivism. The system of philosophy set forth in the *Āgamas* is common to a remarkable degree among all these schools of thought. These *Āgamas* are theistic, that is, they all identify Śiva as the Supreme Lord, immanent and transcendent, capable of accepting worship as the personal Lord and of being realized through *yoga*. This above all else is the connecting strand through all the schools.

Philosophically, the Āgamic tradition includes the following principle doctrines: 1) the five powers of Śiva—creation, preservation, destruction, revealing and concealing grace, 2) The three categories, *Paṭi*, *paśu* and *pāśa*—God, souls and bonds, 3) the three bonds—*ānava*, *karma* and *māyā*, 4) the three-fold power of Śiva—*icṣhā*, *kriyā* and *jñāna śakti*, 5) the thirty-six *tattvas*, or categories of existence, from the five elements to God, 6) the need for the *satguru* and initiation, 7) the power of *mantra*, 8) the four *pādas*—*charyā*, *kriyā*, *yoga* and *jñāna*.

As we explore the individual schools and lineages within Śaivism, keep in mind that all adhere to these doctrines. Our discussion necessarily focuses on the differences between one school and another, but this is not meant to obscure the overwhelming similarity of belief and practice among them.

Monism, dualism and philosophies in-between are all conveyed in the *Śaiva Āgamas*. The various schools based on

*Āgamas* similarly vary in philosophic stance. Kashmīr Śaivite tradition says that Śiva revealed different philosophies for people of different understanding, so that each could advance on the spiritual path toward the recognition of the innate oneness of man and God.

Few worshipers of Śiva are now or were in the past familiar with the *Āgamas*. Reading and writing were the domain of a few specially trained scribes, and today the *Āgamas* remain mostly on the *ola* leaves upon which they have been transmitted for generations.

Āgamic philosophy and practices are conveyed to the common man through other channels, one of which is the *Śaiva Purāṇas*. These oral collections of stories about the Gods are interspersed with Āgamic philosophy. For example, the *Śiva Purāṇa* proclaims "Śiva is the great *ātman* because He is the *ātman* of all, He is forever endowed with the great qualities. The devotee shall realize the identity of Śiva with himself: 'I am Śiva alone'."

A second channel is the Śaivite temple itself, for the construction of the temples and the performance of the rituals are all set forth in the *Āgamas*—in fact it is one of their main subjects. The priests follow manuals called *paddhati*, which are summaries of the instructions for worship contained in the *Śaiva Āgamas*, specifically the *shodaśa upachāras*, or sixteen acts of *pūjā* worship, such as offering of food, incense and water. A third channel is the songs and *bhajanas* of the *sants*, which in their simplicity carry powerful philosophic import. A fourth is the on-going oral teachings of *gurus*, *swāmīs*, *panditas*, *śāstrīs*, priests and elders.

Such matters of agreement belie the fact that Śaivism is not a single, hierarchical system. Rather, it is a thousand traditions, great and small. Some are orthodox and pious, while others are iconoclastic and even—like the Kāpālikas and the Aghorīs—fiercely ascetic, eccentric or orgiastic. For some, Śiva is the powerful, terrible, awesome destroyer, but for



most He is love itself, compassionate and gentle For nearly all of the millions of Śiva's devotees, Śaivism is not, therefore, a school or philosophy, it is life itself To them Śaivism means love of Śiva, and they simply follow the venerable traditions of their family and community These men and women worship in the temples and mark life's passages by holy sacraments They go on pilgrimages, perform daily prayers, meditations and *yogic* disciplines They sing holy hymns, share Purāṇic folk narratives and recite scriptural verses Still, it is useful for us all to understand the formal streams of thought which nurture and sustain our faith Now, in our brief description of these six schools, we begin with today's most prominent form of Śaivism, Śaiva Siddhānta

### Śaiva Siddhānta

Śaiva Siddhānta is the oldest, most vigorous and extensively practiced Śaivite Hindu school today, encompassing millions of devotees, thousands of active temples and dozens of living monastic and ascetic traditions Despite its popularity, Siddhānta's glorious past as an all-India denomination is relatively unknown and it is identified today primarily with its South Indian, Tamil form The term *Śaiva Siddhānta* means "the final or established conclusions of Śaivism" It is the formalized theology of the divine revelations contained in the twenty-eight *Śaiva Āgamas* The first known *guru* of the Śuddha, "pure," Śaiva Siddhānta tradition was Maharishī Nandinātha of Kashmir (ca 250 BCE), recorded in Pāṇini's book of grammar as the teacher of *rishis* Patañjali, Vyāghrapāda and Vasishtha The only surviving written work of Maharishī Nandinātha are twenty-six Sanskrit verses, called the *Nandikeśvara Kāśikā*, in which he carried forward the ancient teachings Because of his monistic approach, Nandinātha is often considered by scholars as an exponent of the Advaita school

The next prominent *guru* on record is Rishī Tirumular,

a *siddha* in the line of Nandinātha who came from the Valley of Kashmir to South India to propound the sacred teachings of the twenty-eight Śaiva Āgamas. In his profound work the *Tirumantiram*, "Holy Incantation," Tirumular for the first time put the vast writings of the Āgamas and the Śuddha Siddhānta philosophy into the sweet Tamil language. Rishi Tirumular, like his *satguru*, Maharishi Nandinātha, propounds a monistic theism in which Śiva is both material and efficient cause, immanent and transcendent. Śiva creates souls and world through emanation from Himself, ultimately reabsorbing them in His oceanic Being, as water flows into water, fire into fire, ether into ether.

The *Tirumantiram* unfolds the way of Siddhānta as a progressive, four-fold path of *charyā*, virtuous and moral living, *kriyā*, temple worship, and *yoga*—internalized worship and union with Paraśiva through the grace of the living *satguru*—which leads to the state of *jñāna* and liberation. After liberation, the soul body continues to evolve until it fully merges with God—*jīva* becomes Śiva.

Tirumular's Śuddha Śaiva Siddhānta shares common distant roots with Mahāsiddhayogi Gorakshanātha's Siddha Siddhānta in that both are Nātha teaching lineages. Tirumular's lineage is known as the Nandinātha Sampradāya, Gorakshanātha's is called the Ādinātha Sampradāya.

Śaiva Siddhānta flowered in South India as a forceful *bhakti* movement infused with insights on *siddha yoga*. During the seventh to ninth centuries, saints Sambandar, Appar and Sundarar pilgrimaged from temple to temple, singing soulfully of Śiva's greatness. They were instrumental in successfully defending Śaivism against the threats of Buddhism and Jainism. Soon thereafter, a king's Prime Minister, Manikkavasagar, renounced a world of wealth and fame to seek and serve God. His heart-melting verses, called *Tiruvacagam*, are full of visionary experience, divine love and urgent striving for Truth. The songs of these four saints are part of

the compendium known as *Tirumurai*, which along with the *Vedas* and *Śaiva Āgamas* form the scriptural basis of Śaiva Siddhānta in Tamil Nadu

Besides the saints, philosophers and ascetics, there were innumerable *siddhas*, “accomplished ones,” God-intoxicated men who roamed their way through the centuries as saints, *gurus*, inspired devotees or even despised outcastes. Śaiva Siddhānta makes a special claim on them, but their presence and revelation cut across all schools, philosophies and lineages to keep the true spirit of Śiva present on earth. These *siddhas* provided the central source of power to spur the religion from age to age. The well-known names include Sage Agastya, Bhoga Rishi, Tirumular and Gorakshanātha. They are revered by the Siddha Siddhāntins, Kāshmir Śaivites and even by the Nepalese branches of Buddhism.

In Central India, Śaiva Siddhānta of the Sanskrit tradition was first institutionalized by Guhāvāsī Siddha (ca 675). The third successor in his line, Rudraśambhu, also known as Āmardaka Tīrthanātha, founded the Āmardaka monastic order (ca 775) in Andhra Pradesh. From this time, three monastic orders arose that were instrumental in Śaiva Siddhānta’s diffusion throughout India. Along with the Āmardaka order (which identified with one of Śaivism’s holiest cities, Ujjain) were the Mattamayūra Order, in the capital of the Chālukya dynasty, near the Punjab, and the Madhumateya order of Central India. Each of these developed numerous sub-orders, as the Siddhānta monastics, full of missionary spirit, used the influence of their royal patrons to propagate the teachings in neighboring kingdoms, particularly in South India. From Mattamayūra, they established monasteries in Maharashtra, Karnataka, Andhra and Kerala (ca 800).

Of the many *gurus* and *āchāryas* that followed, spreading Siddhānta through the whole of India, two *siddhas*, Sadyojyoti and Brihaspati of Central India (ca 850), are credited with the systematization of the theology in Sanskrit

Sadyojyoti, initiated by the Kashmir guru Ugrajyoti, propounded the Siddhānta philosophical views as found in the *Raurava Āgama*. He was succeeded by Rāmakanṭha I, Śrīkantha, Nārāyanakantha and Rāmakantha II, each of whom wrote numerous treatises on Śaiva Siddhānta.

Later, King Bhoja Paramāra of Gujarat (ca 1018) condensed the massive body of Siddhānta scriptural texts that preceded him into a one concise metaphysical treatise called *Tattva Prakāśa*, considered a foremost Sanskrit scripture on Śaiva Siddhānta.

Affirming the monistic view of Śaiva Siddhānta was Śrīkumāra (ca 1056), stating in his commentary, *Tatparyadīpikā*, on Bhoja Paramāra's works, that Pati, paśu and pāśa are ultimately one, and that revelation declares that Śiva is one. He is the essence of everything. Śrīkumāra maintained that Śiva is both the efficient and the material cause of the universe.

Śaiva Siddhānta was readily accepted wherever it spread in India and continued to blossom until the Islamic invasions, which virtually annihilated all traces of Siddhānta from North and Central India, limiting its open practice to the southern areas of the subcontinent.

It was in the twelfth century that Aghoraśiva took up the task of amalgamating the Sanskrit Siddhānta tradition of the North with the Southern, Tamil Siddhānta. As the head of a branch monastery of the Āmardaka Order in Chidambaram, Aghoraśiva gave a unique slant to Śaiva Siddhānta theology, paving the way for a new pluralistic school. In strongly refuting any monist interpretations of Siddhānta, Aghoraśiva brought a dramatic change in the understanding of the God-head by classifying the first five principles, or *tattvas* (Nāda, Bindu, Sadāśiva, Īśvara and Śuddhavidyā), into the category of *pāśa* (bonds), stating they were effects of a cause and inherently unconscious substances. This was clearly a departure from the traditional teaching in which these five were

part of the divine nature of God Aghoraśiva thus inaugurated a new Siddhānta, divergent from the original monistic Śaiva Siddhānta of the Himalayas

Despite Aghoraśiva's pluralistic viewpoint of Siddhānta, he was successful in preserving the invaluable Sanskritic rituals of the ancient Āgamic tradition through his writings To this day, Aghoraśiva's Siddhānta philosophy is followed by almost all of the hereditary Śivāchārya temple priests, and his *Paddhati* texts on the Āgamas have become the standard *pūjā* manuals His *Kriyākramadyotikā* is a vast work covering nearly all aspects of Śaiva Siddhānta ritual, including *dīkshā*, *samskāras*, *ātmārtha pūjā* and installation of Deities

In the thirteenth century, another important development occurred in Śaiva Siddhānta when Meykandar wrote the twelve-verse *Śivajñānabodham* This and subsequent works by other writers laid the foundation of the Meykandar Sampradāya, which propounds a pluralistic realism wherein God, souls and world are coexistent and without beginning Śiva is efficient but not material cause They view the soul's merging in Śiva as salt in water, an eternal oneness that is also twoness This school's literature has so dominated scholarship that Śaiva Siddhānta is often erroneously identified as exclusively pluralistic In truth, there are two interpretations, one monistic and another dualistic, of which the former is the original philosophical premise found in pre-Meykandar scriptures, including the *Upanishads*

Śaiva Siddhānta is rich in its temple traditions, religious festivals, sacred arts, spiritual culture, priestly clans, monastic orders and *guru*-disciple lineages All these still thrive Today Śaiva Siddhānta is most prominent among sixty million Tamil Śaivites who live mostly in South India and Sri Lanka Here and elsewhere in the world, prominent Siddhānta societies, temples and monasteries abound

### Pāśupata Śaivism

The Pāśupatas (from *Paśupati*, a name of Śiva meaning "Lord of souls") are the oldest known sect of Śaivite ascetic monks. They wandered, pounding the dust with iron tridents and stout staffs, their oily hair snarled in unkempt coils or tied in a knot, faces wrinkled with intense devotion, piercing eyes seeing more Śiva than world, loins wrapped in deer skin or bark. The Pāśupatas were *bhaktas* and benign sorcerers of Śiva, estranged from the priest-dominated Vedic society. Religious turbulence in India intensified as the dual waves of Śaivite Āgamic theism and Buddhism washed over the Gangetic plain.

The ways of the Pāśupatas were chronicled by several sometimes hostile contemporary commentators of that distant period, leaving us with a mixed impression of their life and philosophy. They originally allowed anyone to follow their path, which was not caste-discriminative. As the popularity of the Pāśupata lineage rose, high numbers of *brāhmins* defected to it to worship Śiva in unhindered abandon. Eventually it was preferred for a Pāśupata to come from the *brāhmin* caste. The relationship between these Pāśupata monks and the ash-smearing *sādhus* of Buddha's time, or the makers of the Indus Valley seal depicting Śiva as Pāśupata, is not known. They are perhaps the same, perhaps different.

The Pāśupata *sādhus* evoked sheer religious awe. Theirs was a brave, ego-stripping path meant to infuse the seeker with Lord Śiva's *kārunya*, "compassionate grace." Their austerity was leavened with *pūjā* rites to Śiva, with a profound awareness of the cosmos as Śiva's constant becoming and with an almost frolicsome spirit of love toward Him. *Sādhana* began with a strict code of ethics, called *yamas* and *niyamas*, stressing *brahmacharya*, "continence," *ahimsā*, "noninjury," and *tapas*, "asceticism." As detailed in their scriptures, their discipline was practiced in stages. First they assumed vows and practiced special disciplines among themselves which

included Śiva-intoxicated laughing, singing and dancing

Next they disappeared into mainstream society, living incognito. Here they performed outrageous acts to purposely invite public censure, such as babbling, making snorting sounds, walking as if crippled, talking nonsense, and wild gesturing. This *sādhana* was a means of self-purification, of rooting out egoism, of getting over the need to be accepted by the public, by friends or by neighbors, and to fully establish in the subconscious the knowledge that like and dislike, good and bad and all these human ways of thinking and feeling are equal if one's love of Lord Śiva is sufficiently strong. This was designed to break their links with human society and with their own humanness that came with them when they were born.

Returning to overt *sādhana*, they performed austerities, then abandoned all action to perform *kundalinī yoga* and so achieve perpetual nearness with God Śiva. When union matured, they acquired supernatural powers such as omniscience. The Pāśupatas believed that when a person is firm in virtue and able to accept with equanimity all abuse and insult, he is well established in the path of asceticism. Śrī Kaundinya wrote in his sixth-century commentary, *Pañchārtha Bhāṣya*, on the *Pāśupata Sūtra* that the Pāśupata *yogī*—“should appear as though mad, like a pauper, his body covered with filth, letting his beard, nails and hair grow long, without any bodily care. Hereby he cuts himself off from the estates (*varna*) and stages of life (*āśramas*), and the power of dispassion is produced.”

Pāśupatism is primarily an ascetic's path that rejects dialectical logic and prizes *sādhana* as a means to actuate Lord Śiva's *kārunya*. Seekers embrace strict *yama-niyama* vows, their *sādhana*s graduating from “action” to “nonaction.” Worshipful action includes *pūjā*, penance, *Namah Śivāya japa*, wearing sacred ash and showing abandoned love of God Śiva.

The sect was said to have been founded by Lord Śiva Himself, who imparted the doctrines to certain *maharishis*. Around 200 CE, Pāśupata's most historically prominent *satguru*, Lakulīśa, appeared in what is today India's state of Gujarat. According to the *Karavana Māhātmya*, he was born to a *brāhmin* family, but died in his seventh month, after displaying remarkable spiritual powers. His mother cast his body into a river (a traditional form of infant burial), and a group of tortoises carried it to a powerful Śiva shrine. There the boy returned to life and was raised as an ascetic. By another account, Lakulīśa ("lord of the staff") was an anchorite who died and was revived by Lord Śiva, who entered his body to preach the Pāśupata Dharma to the world. The site of his appearance is a town known today as *Kayavarohana* ("to incarnate in another's body"). The miracle is still festively celebrated. Two stone inscriptions in the village honor the names of this *satguru's* four main *śishyas*: Kuśika, Gārgya, Maitreya and Kaurusha.

Satguru Lakulīśa was a dynamic Pāśupata reformist. In his *sūtras*, outlining the bold codes of conduct and *yoga* precepts, he restricted admittance to the three higher castes (*vaiśya*, *kshatriya* and *brāhmin*) in an attempt to link this school with Vedic orthodoxy. A popular householder path arose out of this exclusively ascetic order. Today numerous Pāśupata centers of worship are scattered across India, where Satguru Lakulīśa as Śiva is often enshrined, his image on the face of a Śivalinga, seated in lotus posture, virilely naked, holding a *danda* in his left hand and a citron fruit in his right. Their most revered temple, Somanātha, is in Gujarat, a powerful, active temple which has endured several cycles of destruction and rebuilding.

A seventh-century Chinese traveler, Hsien Tsiang, wrote that 10,000 Pāśupatas then occupied Varanasi. The Pāśupata tradition spread to Nepal in the eighth century, where the now famous Pāśupatināth Temple became a prime pilgrim-



age center and remains so to this day. At its medieval zenith, Pāśupatism blanketed Western, Northwestern and South-eastern India, where it received royal patronage. In the fifteenth century, it retreated to its strongholds of Gujarat, Nepal and the Himalayan hills.

Traditionally, the deepest Pāśupata teachings have been kept secret, reserved for initiates who were tried, tested and found most worthy. Central scriptures are the *Pāśupata Sūtras* (ascribed to the venerable Lakulīśa), Kaundinya's commentary on them, *Pañchārtha Bhāṣya* (ca 500) and the *Mrigendra Āgama*.

The Pāśupata philosophy prior to Lakulīśa was dualistic. Little is known of it, as no writings remain. But scholars have discerned from references to Pāśupata by other ancient writers that it regarded Śiva as only the efficient cause of the universe, not the material. It posited five primary categories—cause, effect, union, ritual and liberation. The later category was somewhat unusual, as the Pāśupatas believed the soul never merged in Śiva and that liberation was simply a state with no further pain. They taught that God can create changes in the world and in the destinies of men according to His own pleasure. God does not necessarily depend upon the person or his *karma* (actions).

Lakulīśa's Pāśupata system retained the idea of five categories, but regarded the goal of the soul as attainment of divine perfection. Further, he put God as the material cause of the universe, effectively moving the philosophy from dualism to dual-nondual. The soul, *paśu*, is prevented from closeness to Śiva by *pāśa*, "fetters." The soul retains its individuality in its liberated state, termed *sāyujya*, defined as closeness to but not complete union with God. Lord Śiva has no power over liberated souls.

The Kāpālīka, "skull-bearers," sect developed out of the Pāśupatas and were likewise—but perhaps justifiably—vilified by their opponents. At worst, they are portrayed as

drunken and licentious, engaged in human sacrifice and practicing the blackest of magic. Other portrayals are more benign. For example, in the early Sanskrit drama *Mālatī-Mādhava*, a Kāpālīka says with great insight, “Being exclusively devoted to alms alone, penance alone and rites alone—all this is easy to obtain. Being intent upon the Self alone, however, is a state difficult to obtain.” Even today, followers of this sect are found begging food which they accept in a skull, preferably that of a *brāhmin*. Some scholars see a connection between the Kāpālīkas and the later Gorakshanātha *yogīs*.

In the seventh century, another sect developed out of the Pāśupata tradition, the Kālāmukhas, “black-faced,” who established a well-organized social structure with many temples and monasteries in what is now Karnataka and elsewhere. Like the earlier Pāśupatas, they suffered vilification at the hands of hostile commentators. Nothing is left of their scriptures, hence details of their philosophy and life is obscure. However, the esteem in which they were once held is reflected in an 1162 inscription on one of their temples stating, in part, that it was “a place devoted to the observances of Śaiva saints leading perpetually the life of celibate religious students, a place for the quiet study of four *Vedas*, the *Yoga Śāstras* and the other kinds of learning, a place where food is always given to the poor, the helpless, . the musicians and bards whose duty it is to awaken their masters with music and songs, and to the mendicants and all beggars, a place where many helpless sick people are harbored and treated, a place of assurance of safety for all living creatures.” The Vīra Śaiva school is thought by scholars to have developed out of and eventually replaced the Kālāmukhas, apparently taking over their temples and *āśramas*.

Today’s reclusive Pāśupata monks live in Northern India and Nepal and influence followers worldwide.

## Vīra Śaivism

Vīra Śaivism is one of the most dynamic of modern-day Śaivite schools. It was made popular by the remarkable South Indian *brāhmin* Śrī Basavanna (1105–1167). Adherents trace the roots of their faith back to the *rishis* of ancient times. Vīra, “heroic,” Śaivites are also known as Lingāyats, “bearers of the Linga.” All members are to constantly wear a Linga encased in a pendant around the neck. Of this practice, Thavathiru Śāntalinga Rāmasamy of Coimbatore recently said, “I can say that Vīra Śaiva worship is the best form of worship because Śivalinga is worn on our body and it unites the soul with the Omnipresence. We are always in touch with Lord Śiva, without even a few seconds break.” Followers are also called *Lingavāntas* and *Śivaśaranās*.

Like the sixteenth-century Protestant revolt against Catholic authority, the Lingāyat movement championed the cause of the down-trodden, rebelling against a powerful *brāhminical* system which promoted social inequality through a caste system that branded a whole class of people (*haryans*) as polluted. Going against the way of the times, the Lingāyats rejected, Vedic authority, caste hierarchy, the system of four *āśramas*, a multiplicity of Gods, ritualistic (and self-aggrandizing) priestcraft, animal sacrifice, *karmic* bondage, the existence of inner worlds, duality of God and soul, temple worship and the traditions of ritual purity-pollution.

Vīra Śaiva tradition states that Basavanna was a reflective and defiant youth who rejected much of the Śaivism practiced in his day, tore off his sacred thread, *yājñopavīta*, at age 16 and fled to Sangama, Karnataka. He received shelter and encouragement from Īśānya Guru, a Śaivite *brāhmin* of the prevailing Kālāmukha sect, and studied under him at his monastery-temple complex for twelve years. There he developed a profound devotion to Śiva as Lord Kudalasangama, “Lord of the meeting rivers.” At age 28, Basavanna arrived at the insight that the brotherhood of man rests on the doc-

trine of a personalized, individual Godhood in the form of *Iṣṭalinga* ("chosen, or personal Linga") This spiritual realization gave rise to the central Vira Śaiva belief that the human body is to be revered as a moving temple of the Lord, to be kept in a perpetual state of purity and sublimity.

Near the completion of his studies at Sangama, Basavanna had a vivid dream in which the Lord Kudalasangama touched his body gently, saying, "Basavanna, my son, the time has come at last for your departure from this place. There is Bijjala in Mangalavede. Carry on your work of building a just society from there." Having received these inner orders, he journeyed to Mangalavede and sought service in the court of Bijjala. He rose to become chief officer of the royal treasury, minister to this *mahārāja* in his troubled Śaivite country at odds with Buddhism and Jainism. This position led to the swift spreading of Basavanna's revolutionary message of a new, visionary religious society.

Basavanna wedded two wives, taking on the household-er *dharma*, strengthening his teaching that all followers—not only renunciates—can live a holy life. He gave discourses each evening, denouncing caste hierarchy, magical practices, astrology, temple building and more, urging growing crowds of listeners to think rationally and worship Śiva as the God within themselves. Here Basavanna lived and preached for twenty years, developing a large Śaivite religious movement. The function of gathering for discourse became known as Śivānubhava Mandapa, "hall of Śiva experience."

At age 48 he moved with King Bijjala to Kalyana, where, joined by Allama Prabhu, his fame continued to grow for the next fourteen years. Devotees of every walk of life flocked from all over India to join with him. Through the years, opposition to his egalitarian community grew strong among more conventional citizens. Tensions came to a head in 1167 when a *brāhmin* and *śūdra*, both Lingāyats, married. Outraged citizens appealed to King Bijjala, who took ruthless

action and executed them both. The unstable political situation further disintegrated, and the King was shortly thereafter murdered by political opponents or possibly by Lingāyat radicals. Riots erupted and the Lingāyats were scattered far and wide. Basavanna, feeling his mission in the capital had come to an end, left for Sangama, and shortly thereafter died, at the age of 62. Leaders and followers transferred the institutional resources created in the urban Kalayana to the rural villages of Karnataka.

In spite of persecution, successful spiritual leadership left a legacy of sainthood, including many women saints. If Basavanna was the faith's intellectual and social architect, Allama Prabhu was its austere mystical powerhouse. The doctrines of these two founders are contained in their *Vachanas*, or prose lyrics. Vīra Śaiva spiritual authority derives from the life and writings of these two knowers of Śiva and of numerous other Śivaśaranās, "those surrendered to God." Roughly 450 writers of these scriptures have been identified. The *Vachanas*, "what is said," scorn the *Vedas*, mock ritual, and reject the legends of Gods and Goddesses. The authors of these verses saw formal religions as the "establishment," static institutions that promise man security and predictability, whereas they knew that religion must be dynamic, spontaneous, freed of bargains extracted in exchange for salvation. These scriptures reject "doing good" so one may go to heaven. Allama wrote, "Feed the poor, tell the truth, make water places for the thirsty and build tanks for a town. You may go to heaven after death, but you'll be nowhere near the truth of our Lord. And the man who knows our Lord, he gets no results." The *Vachanas* are incandescent poetry, full of humor, ridicule and the white heat of Truth-seeking, bristling with monotheism, commanding devotees to enter the awesome realm of personal spirituality.

These poems, written in the Kannada language, are central in the religious life of Lingāyats. Here are some samples

Ganāchāra wrote, "They say I have been born, but I have no birth, Lord! They say I have died, but I have no death, O Lord!" Basavanna exclaimed, "Lord, the *brāhmin* priest does not act as he speaks. How is that? He goes one way, while the official code goes the other!" Allama Prabhu said, "Then, when there was neither beginning nor nonbeginning, when there was no conceit or arrogance, when there was neither peace nor peacelessness, when there was neither nothingness nor nonnothingness, when everything remained uncreated and raw, you, Guheśvara, were alone, all by yourself, present yet absent."

Ironically, in the centuries following these days of reform, Vīra Śaivism gradually reabsorbed much of what Basavanna had rejected. Thus emerged temple worship, certain traditions of ritual purity, giving gifts to *gurus*, and the stratification of society, headed up by two large hierarchical orders of *jangamas*—resulting in the institutionalization of the crucial *guru-disciple* relationship, which by Vīra Śaiva precept should be very personal. Efforts were made to derive Vīra Śaiva theology from traditional Hindu scriptures such as *Āgamas* and *Sūtras*—a need rejected by the early *śaranās*. To this day, by rejecting the *Vedas*, Lingāyats continue to put themselves outside the fold of mainstream Hinduism, but in their acceptance of certain Śaiva *Āgamas*, align themselves with the other Śaiva sects. Vīra Śaivites generally regard their faith as a distinct and independent religion.

The original ideals, however, remain embedded in Lingāyat scripture, which is of three types: 1) the *Vachanas*, 2) historical narratives and biographies in verse and 3) specialized works on doctrine and theology. Among the most central texts are Basavanna's *Vachanas*, Allama Prabhu's *Mantra Gopya*, Chennabasavanna's *Kāraṇa Hasuge*, and the collected work called *Śūnya Sampādane*.

The monistic-theistic doctrine of Vīra Śaivism is called Śakti Viśiṣṭādvaita—a version of qualified nondualism.

which accepts both difference and nondifference between soul and God, like rays are to the sun. In brief, Śiva and the cosmic force, or existence, are one (“Śiva are you, you shall return to Śiva”). Yet, Śiva is beyond His creation, which is real, not illusory. God is both efficient and material cause. The soul in its liberated state attains undifferentiated union with Śiva. The Vīra Śaiva saint Renukāchārya said, “Like water placed in water, fire in fire, the soul that becomes mingled in the Supreme Brahman is not seen as distinct.”

True union and identity of Śiva (Linga) and soul (*āṅga*) is life’s goal, described as *śūnya*, or nothingness, which is not an empty void. One merges with Śiva by *śaṭsthala*, a progressive six-stage path of devotion and surrender: *bhakti* (devotion), *maheśa* (selfless service), *prasāda* (earnestly seeking Śiva’s grace), *prāṇalinga* (experience of all as Śiva), *śaranā* (egoless refuge in Śiva), and *aikya* (oneness with Śiva). Each phase brings the seeker closer, until soul and God are fused in a final state of perpetual Śiva consciousness, as rivers merging in the ocean.

Vīra Śaivism’s means of attainment depends on the *pañchāchāra* (five codes of conduct) and *aṣṭāvarana* (eight shields) to protect the body as the abode of the Lord. The five codes are *Lingāchāra* (daily worship of the Śivalinga), *sadāchāra* (attention to vocation and duty), *Śivāchāra* (acknowledging Śiva as the one God and equality among members), *bhṛityāchāra* (humility towards all creatures) and *ganāchāra* (defense of the community and its tenets).

The eight shields are *guru*, *Linga*, *jangama* (wandering monk), *pādukā* (water from bathing the Linga or *guru*’s feet), *prasāda* (sacred offering), *vibhūti* (holy ash), *rudrāksha* (holy beads) and *mantra* (Namah Śivāya). One enters the Vīra Śaiva religion through formal initiation called Linga Dīkshā, a rite for both boys and girls which replaces the sacred thread ceremony and enjoins the devotee to worship the personal Śivalinga daily. Lingāyats place great emphasis on *this*

life, on equality of all members (regardless of caste, education, sex, etc.), on intense social involvement and service to the community. Their faith stresses free will, affirms a purposeful world and avows a pure monotheism.

Today Vīra Śaivism is a vibrant faith, particularly strong in its religious homeland of Karnataka, South-Central India. Roughly forty million people live here, of which perhaps 25% are members of the Vīra Śaiva religion. There is hardly a village in the state without a *jangama* and a *maṭha* (monastery). On the occasion of birth in a Lingāyat family, the child is entered into the faith that same day by a visiting *jangama*, who bestows a small Śivalinga encased in a pendant tied to a thread. This same Linga is to be worn throughout life.

### Kashmīr Śaivism

Kashmīr Śaivism, with its potent stress on man's recognition of an already existing oneness with Śiva, is the most single-mindedly monistic of the six schools. It arose in the ninth century in Northern India, then a tapestry of small feudal kingdoms. Mahārājas patronized the various religions. Buddhism was still strong. Tantric Śāktism flourished toward the Northeast. Śaivism had experienced a renaissance since the sixth century, and the most widespread Hindu God was Śiva.

According to the traditions of Kashmīr Śaivism, Lord Śiva originally set forth sixty-four systems, or philosophies, some monistic, some dualistic and some monistic theistic. Eventually these were lost, and Śiva commanded Sage Durvāsa to revive the knowledge. Sage Durvāsa's "mind-born sons" were assigned to teach the philosophies: Tryambaka (the monistic), Āmardaka (the dualistic) and Śrīnātha (monistic theistic). Thus, Tryambaka at an unknown time laid a new foundation for Kashmīr Śaiva philosophy.

Then, it is said, Lord Śiva Himself felt the need to resolve conflicting interpretations of the *Āgamas* and counter the encroachment of dualism on the ancient monistic doctrines.



In the early 800s, Śrī Vasugupta was living on Mahādeva Mountain near Srinagar. Tradition states that one night Lord Śiva appeared to him in a dream and told him of the whereabouts of a great scripture carved in rock. Upon awakening, Vasugupta rushed to the spot and found seventy-seven terse *sūtras* etched in stone, which he named the *Śiva Sūtras*. Vasugupta expounded the *Sūtras* to his followers, and gradually the philosophy spread. On this scriptural foundation arose the school known as Kashmir Śaivism, Northern Śaivism, Pratyabhijñā Darśana ("recognition school"), or Trika-śāsana ("Trika system"). Trika, "three," refers to the school's three-fold treatment of the Divine: Śiva, Śakti and soul, as well as to three sets of scriptures and a number of other triads.

Kashmir Śaivite literature is in three broad divisions: *Āgama Śāstra*, *Spanda Śāstra* and *Pratyabhijñā Śāstra*. *Āgama Śāstra* includes works of divine origin: specifically the *Śaiva Āgama* literature, but also including Vasugupta's *Śiva Sūtras*. The *Spanda Śāstra*, or *Spanda Kārikās* (of which only two *sūtras* are left), are both attributed to Vasugupta's disciple Kallaṭa (ca 850-900). These elaborate the principles of the *Śiva Sūtras*. The *Pratyabhijñā Śāstra*'s principle components are the *Śiva Dṛishṭi* by Vasugupta's disciple, Somānanda, and the *Pratyabhijñā Sūtras* by Somānanda's pupil, Utpaladeva (ca 900-950). Abhinavagupta (ca 950-1000) wrote some forty works, including *Tantrāloka*, "Light on Tantra," a comprehensive text on Āgamic Śaiva philosophy and ritual. It was Abhinavagupta whose brilliant and encyclopedic works established Kashmir Śaivism as an important philosophical school.

Kashmir Śaivism provides an extremely rich and detailed understanding of the human psyche, and a clear and distinct path of *kundalinī-siddha yoga* to the goal of Self Realization. In its history the tradition produced numerous *siddhas*, adepts of remarkable insight and power. It is said that Abhinavagupta, after completing his last work on the Pratyabhi-

jñā system, entered the Bhairava cave near Mangam with 1,200 disciples, and he and they were never seen again

Kashmīr Śaivism is intensely monistic. It does not deny the existence of a personal God or of the Gods. But much more emphasis is put upon the personal meditation and reflection of the devotee and his guidance by a *guru*. Creation of the soul and world is explained as God Śiva's *ābhāsa*, "shining forth" of Himself in His dynamic aspect of Śakti, the first impulse, called *spanda*. As the Self of all, Śiva is immanent and transcendent, and performs through his Śakti the five actions of creation, preservation, destruction, revealing and concealing. The Kashmīr Śaivite is not so much concerned with worshiping a personal God as he is with attaining the transcendental state of Śiva consciousness.

An esoteric and contemplative path, Kashmīr Śaivism embraces both knowledge and devotion. *Sādhana* leads to the assimilation of the object (world) in the subject (I) until the Self (Śiva) stands revealed as one with the universe. The goal—liberation—is sustained recognition (*pratyabhijñā*) of one's true Self as nothing but Śiva. There is no merger of soul in God, as they are eternally nondifferent.

There are three *upāyas*, stages of attainment of God consciousness. These are not sequential, but do depend upon the evolution of the devotee. The first stage is *ānavopāya*, which corresponds to the usual system of worship, *yogic* effort and purification through breath control. The second stage is *śāktopāya*, maintaining a constant awareness of Śiva through discrimination in one's thoughts. The third stage is *śāmbhavopāya* in which one attains instantly to God consciousness simply upon being told by the *guru* that the essential Self is Śiva. There is a fourth stage, *anupāya*, "no means," which is the mature soul's recognition that there is nothing to be done, reached for or accomplished except to reside in one's own being, which is already of the nature of Śiva. Realization relies upon the *satguru*, whose grace is the blossom-

ing of all *sādhana*

Despite many renowned *gurus*, geographic isolation in the Kashmir Valley and latter Muslim domination kept the following relatively small. Scholars have recently brought the scriptures to light again, republishing surviving texts. The original *paramparā* was represented in recent times by Swāmī Lakshman Joo. Today various organizations promulgate the esoteric teachings to some extent worldwide. While the number of Kashmir Śaivite formal followers is uncertain, the school remains an important influence in India. Many Kashmir Śaivites have fled the presently war-torn Valley of Kashmir to settle in Jammu, New Delhi and elsewhere in North India. This diaspora of devout Śaivites may serve to spread the teachings into new areas.

### Śiva Advaita

Śiva Advaita is the philosophy of Śrīkantha as expounded in his *Brahma Sūtra Bhāṣya*, a Śaivite commentary on the *Brahma Sūtras* (ca 500-200 BCE). The *Brahma Sūtras* are 550 terse verses by Bādarāyana summarizing the *Upanishads*. The *Brahma Sūtras*, the *Bhagavad Gītā* and the *Upanishads* are the three central scriptures of the various interpretations of Vedānta philosophy. Śankara, Rāmānuja and Mādhva wrote commentaries on these books deriving three quite different philosophies—nondualism, qualified nondualism and dualism, respectively—from the same texts. Each claimed his to be the true interpretation of the *Vedas* and vigorously refuted all other interpretations. Śankara was a monist and accorded worship of the personal God a lesser status. Rāmānuja and Mādhva, on the other hand, developed theistic philosophies in which devotion to Viṣṇu was the highest path. There was as yet no school of Vedānta elevating devotion to Śiva to similar heights. Śrīkantha sought to fill this gap. The resulting philosophy is termed *Śiva Viśiṣṭādvaita* and is not unlike Rāmānuja's qualified nondualism. In the

process of his commentary, Śrīkantha put Śaiva philosophy into Vedāntic terminology

Śrīkantha lived in the eleventh century. Of his personal life virtually nothing is historically known, so the man remains a mystery. Nor did he catalyze a social movement that would vie with Vīra Śaivism or Śaiva Siddhānta. But from his writings it is clear that Śrīkantha was a masterful expositor and a devout lover of God Śiva. His influence was largely due to Appaya Dikshita, who wrote a compelling commentary on Śrīkantha's work in the sixteenth century as part of a successful multi-pronged attempt to defend Śaivism against the inroads of Vaiṣṇava proselytization in South India.

According to Śrīkantha, Śiva created the world for no purpose except out of play or sport. Śiva is the efficient cause of creation. As His Śakti, He is also the material cause. Śiva assumes the form of the universe, transforms Himself into it, not directly but through His Śakti. Yet, He is transcendent, greater than and unaffected and unlimited by His creation. Śiva has a spiritual body and lives in a heaven more luminous than millions of suns, which liberated souls eventually can attain. Śrīkantha in his *Brahma Sūtra Bhāṣya* said, "At the time of creation, preceded by the first vibrations of His energies—solely through an impulse of will, independently of any material cause, and out of His own substance—He creates, that is, manifests, the totality of conscious and unconscious things."

Purification, devotion and meditation upon Śiva as the Self—the *ākāśa* within the heart—define the path. Meditation is directed to the Self, Śiva, the One Existence that evolved into all form. Release comes only after certain preliminary attainments, including tranquility, faith and nonattachment. Bonds which fetter the soul can be shattered in the torrent of continuous contemplation on and identification with the Supreme, Śiva. Liberation depends on grace, not deeds.

Upon death, the liberated soul goes to Śiva along the

path of the Gods, without return to earthly existence. The individual soul continues to exist in the spiritual plane, enjoying the bliss of knowing all as Śiva, enjoying all experiences and powers, except that of creation of the universe. Ultimately, the soul does not become perfectly one with Brahman (or Śiva), but shares with Brahman all excellent qualities. Man is responsible, free to act as he wills to, for Śiva only fulfills needs according to the soul's *karma*. Śrīkanṭha wrote in *Brahma Sūtra Bhāṣya*, "Śiva associates Himself with the triple energies [knowledge, will and action], enters into the total agglomerate of effects, and emerges as the universe, comprising the triad of Deities [Viṣṇu, Brahmā and Rudra]. Who can comprehend the greatness of Śiva, the All-Powerful and the All-Knowing?"

Appaya Dīkṣita (1554-1626) is a most unusual person in Hindu history. His commentaries on various schools of philosophy were so insightful that they are revered by those schools, even though he did not adhere to their philosophies. An ardent devotee of Lord Śiva, he compiled manuals on *pūjā* worship which are used to the present day by Śaivite priests. Additionally, he was an excellent devotional poet. Philosophically he adhered throughout his life to the *advaita* school of Ādi Śankara. In his battles to reestablish the worship of Śiva against the Vaishnavism of the day, his life came under threat numerous times. Śaivism was suffering setbacks in South India in the sixteenth century due largely to the patronage of Vaishnavism by Rāmarāja, king of Vijayanagara, whose territory encompassed an area as large as modern Tamil Nadu. When Rāmarāja was killed at the fall of Vijayanagara in 1565, his successors ruling from other cities continued the patronage of Vaishnavism. Appaya succeeded at this crucial juncture in gaining the patronage of King Chinna Bomman of Vellore, who ruled from 1559 to 1579. Bomman had once been subject to the king of Vijayanagara, but after the city fell, he declared his own independence.

Appaya Dikshita set out to compose commentaries on the various philosophies of his day, including that of Śrīkantha. Appaya's commentaries on the writings of the dualist Mādhva are revered to this day by Mādhva's adherents. Through his 104 books, Appaya created more harmonious relations with the other systems of thought, promoted Śaivism from several philosophical approaches at once and contributed to the basic devotional worship of Śiva. The patronage of King Chinna Bomma assured the wide spread of Appaya's ideas through specially convened conferences of up to 500 scholars and extensive travel for both Appaya and the trained scholars who served as Śaiva missionaries. Appaya wrote in one text, "Since the summer heat of the evil-minded critics of Lord Śiva and His worship are awaiting in order to burn out and destroy the sprouts of Śiva *bhakti* or devotion that arise in the minds of the devotees, for which the seed is their accumulated merit in their previous births, this work, *Śiva-kārnāmṛita*, with its verses made, as it were, of nectar, is written to help rejuvenate those sprouts."

Appaya Dikshita concluded that the philosophies of Śrīkantha and those of other dualists or modified dualists were necessary steps to recognizing the truth of monism, *advaita*. He argued that Śrīkantha's emphasis on Saguna Brahman (God with qualities) rather than Nirguna Brahman (God without qualities) was meant to create, for the moment, faith and devotion in fellow Śaivites, for such devotion is a necessary prerequisite to the discipline needed to know the Transcendent Absolute, Paraśiva, Nirguna Brahman. Appaya Dikshita said in *Śivarkamanī Dīpikā*, "Although *advaita* was the religion accepted and impressed by the great teachers of old like Śrī Śaṅkara [and the various scriptures], still an inclination for *advaita* is produced only by the grace of Lord Śiva and by that alone."

Śiva Advaita apparently has no community of followers or formal membership today, but may be understood as a

highly insightful reconciliation of Vedānta and Siddhānta. Its importance is in its promotion by Appaya Dīkshita to revive Śaivism in the sixteenth century

### Siddha Siddhānta

Siddha Siddhānta, or Gorakshanātha Śaivism, is generally considered to have come in the lineage of the earlier ascetic orders of India. Gorakshanātha was a disciple of Matsyendranātha, patron saint of Nepal, revered by certain esoteric Buddhist schools as well as by Hindus. Gorakshanātha lived most likely in the tenth century and wrote in Hindi. Historians connect the Gorakshanātha lineage with that of the Pāśupatas and their later successors, as well as to the *siddha yoga* and Āgamic traditions. Gorakshanātha adherents themselves say that Matsyendranātha learned the secret Śaiva truths directly from Śiva, as Ādinātha, and he in turn passed them on to Gorakshanātha. The school systematized and developed the practice of *haṭha yoga* to a remarkable degree, indeed nearly all of what is today taught about *haṭha yoga* comes from this school.

Gorakshanātha, the preeminent *guru* and author of *Siddha Siddhānta Paddhati* ("tracks on the doctrines of the adepts"), was a man of awesome spiritual power and discerning practicality. As a renunciate, his early life is unknown, though he is thought to have been a native of Punjab. He mastered the highly occult Nātha *yoga* sciences after studying for twelve years under his famed *guru*, Matsyendranātha. Roaming North India from Assam to Kashmir, he worshiped Śiva in temples, realizing Him in the deepest of *samādhis* and awakening many of the powers of a Śaiva adept.

By creating twelve orders with monastery-temple complexes across the face of North India, Gorakshanātha popularized his school and effectively insulated pockets of Śaivism from Muslim dominance. Matsyendranātha had already established it in Nepal, where to this day he is deified as the

country's patron saint. Scholars believe that Gorakshanātha's *yoga* represents a development out of the earlier Pāsupata and related ascetic orders, as there are many similarities of practice and philosophy

To outer society, Gorakshanātha's *siddha yogīs* were mesmerizing, memorable men of renunciation—dressed in saffron robes, with flowing, jet-black hair, foreheads white with holy ash, large circular earrings, *rudrāksha* beads and a unique horn whistle on a hair-cord worn around the neck, signifying the primal vibration, Aum Muslims called the Gorakshanāthis "Kanphatī," meaning "split-eared ones," referring to the rite of slitting the ear cartilage to insert sometimes monstrous earrings Some Muslims even joined the Kanphatīs, and heads of a few Gorakshanātha monasteries are known by the Muslim title *pīr*, "holy father" This unusual ecumenical connection was of enormous benefit at a time of general religious persecution

These Nāthas perceived the inner and outer universes as Śiva's cosmic body (Mahāsākāra Pinda), as the continuous blossoming forth of Himself as Śakti (power) into an infinity of souls, worlds and forces Earth and life, human frailties and human Divinity are Śiva manifest As such, these men expressed spiritual exaltation in mankind and joyous devotion through temple worship and pilgrimage But their daily focus was on internal worship and *kundalinī yoga* Inside themselves they sought realization of Parāsamvid, the supreme transcendent state of Śiva

Gorakshanātha, in *Viveka Mārtānda*, gives his view of *samādhi* "Samādhi is the name of that state of phenomenal consciousness, in which there is the perfect realization of the absolute unity of the individual soul and the Universal Soul, and in which there is the perfect dissolution of all the mental processes Just as a perfect union of salt and water is achieved through the process of *yoga*, so when the mind or the phenomenal consciousness is absolutely unified or iden-



tified with the soul through the process of the deepest concentration, this is called the state of *samādhī*. When the individuality of the individual soul is absolutely merged in the self-luminous transcendent unity of the Absolute Spirit (Śiva), and the phenomenal consciousness also is wholly dissolved in the Eternal, Infinite, Transcendent Consciousness, then perfect *samarasattva* (the essential unity of all existences) is realized, and this is called *samādhī*.”

Having achieved *samarasattva* (or *samarasa*), the *yogī* remains continually aware of the transcendent unity of God, even while being aware of the ordinary material world. This is the supreme achievement of the system.

The school is noted for its concept of *kāya siddhī*, extreme physical longevity, and even the claim of immortality for some. Indeed, Gorakshanātha himself and many of his followers are considered to be alive today, carrying on their work from hidden places. The precise methods of this are not delineated in their texts, but are taught directly by the *guru*.

Among the central scriptures are *Haṭha Yoga Pradīpikā* by Svātmārāma, *Gheranda Samhitā*, *Śiva Samhitā*, and *Jñān-āmṛita*, which are among forty or so works attributed to Gorakshanātha or his followers. Most deal with *haṭha yoga*.

The Siddha Siddhānta theology embraces both transcendent Śiva (being) and immanent Śiva (becoming). Śiva is efficient and material cause. Creation and final return of soul and cosmos to Śiva are described as “bubbles arising and returning to water.” Siddha Siddhānta accepts the *advaitic* experience of the advanced *yogī* while not denying the mixed experiences of oneness and twoness in ordinary realms of consciousness.

Through the centuries, a large householder community has also arisen which emulates the renunciate ideals. Today there are perhaps 750,000 adherents of Siddha Siddhānta Śaivism, who are often understood as Śāktas or *advaita tantrics*. In truth, they range from street magicians and snake

charmers, to established citizens, to advanced *sādhus*. The school fans out through India, but is most prominent in North India and Nepal. Devotees are called *yogīs*, and stress is placed on world renunciation—even for householders. Over time and still today, the deeper theology has often been eclipsed by a dominant focus on *kundalinī-haṭha yoga*. Values and attitudes often hold followers apart from society. This sect is also most commonly known as Nātha, the Goraksha Pantha and Siddha Yogī Sampradāya. Other names include Ādinātha Sampradāya, Nāthamaṭha and Siddhamārga. The word *gorakh* or *goraksha* means “cowherd.” (The name *Gorkhā* means an inhabitant of Nepal and is the same as *Gurkhā*, the famous martial tribe of that country.)

Today this Nātha tradition is represented by the Gorakshanātha *sādhus* and numerous other venerable orders of Himalayan monks who uphold the spirit of world renunciation in quest of the Self. Millions of modern-day seekers draw from their teachings, treasuring especially the sixteenth-century text by Svātmarāma, *Haṭha Yoga Pradīpikā*, “light on *haṭha yoga*.” From these strong, ancient roots, *yoga* schools have arisen in major cities in nearly every country of the world. They are aggressive. They are dynamic. They produce results, physically, mentally and emotionally. They usually do not include Hindu religion but for a minimal presentation of *pūjā*, *guru*, *karma*, *dharma* and the existence of an all-pervasive force, called energy. Because of this loosely-knit philosophical premise and the pragmatic results gained from the practices of *haṭha yoga*, *prāṇāyāma* and meditation, a large following of seekers from all religious backgrounds ever expands. Today these schools encompass *āyurveda*, astrology and various forms of holistic health practice. Advanced meditation is taught to the most sincere. Thus the ancient wisdom of Siddha Siddhānta survives in the modern age to improve the quality of life for mankind and aid truth seekers everywhere to attain their goal.

## Six Schools of Saivism, Conclusion

Today, in one form or another, each of these six schools of Śaivism continue unhindered. Their leaders and *gurus* have reincarnated and are picking up the threads of the ancient past and bringing them forward to the twenty-first century. Seekers who worship Śiva are carefully choosing between one or another of them. *Gurus*, initiated, uninitiated or self-appointed by the spiritual forces within them, find themselves declaring God Śiva as Supreme Lord and aligning themselves with one or another of the Śaiva lineages. Non-Hindus have been attracted to the profound Śaiva philosophy, serving as unheralded missionaries. Many have fully converted to Saivism as the religion of their soul. In this modern age, toward the end of the twentieth century, Śaivism has gained a new strength and power. The schools of Śaivism relate and interrelate in love, kindness, compassion and understanding, share their strengths and fortify each other's weaknesses.

Our most eminent God Śiva knew His creations were not all the same. In different moods He created different kinds of souls at different times. Similarly, in His supreme wisdom, He created these six approaches to His grace upon one common Vedic-Āgamic foundation—one for *yogic* ascetics, one for heroic nonconformists, one for *kundalīnī* mystics, one for the philosophically astute, one for immortal renunciates and one for devotional nondualists. None were forgotten. Yea, even today, Lord Śiva is ordaining leaders within the boundaries of these six philosophical streams to preach His message in sacred eloquence.





Ekam Sat Anekāḥ Panthāḥ  
एकम् सत् अनेकाः पन्थाः



Truth Is One,  
Paths Are Many

Here in a lotus flower are assembled the world's major religions, each holding its uniquely profound perception of the many-petaled cosmos, symbolized by the lotus. In the center the Pranava Aum denotes Truth Itself.



# Truth Is One, Paths Are Many

**I**F RELIGION HAS EVER CONFUSED AND CONFOUNDED YOU, TAKE HEART! THIS NEXT RESOURCE SECTION WAS WRITTEN JUST FOR YOU

It is our humble attempt to gather from hundreds of sources a simple, in-a-nutshell summary of the world's major spiritual paths. The strength of this undertaking, brevity, is also its flaw. Complex and subtle distinctions, not to mention important exceptions, are consciously set aside for the sake of simplicity. There are hundreds of books addressing deeper matters, but none that we know of which have attempted a straightforward comparative summary. There is a need for no-nonsense reviews of religion, and this may hopefully begin to meet that need.

By juxtaposing a few of their major beliefs, we hope to highlight how other major world religions and important modern secular movements are similar to and differ from Hinduism. A leisurely hour with this section under a favorite tree will endow you with a good grasp of the essential truths of every major religion practiced today on the planet. It may also dispel the myth that all religions are one, that they all seek to lead adherents by the same means to the same Ultimate Reality. They don't, as a conscientious review will show. As you read through the 171 beliefs in this study, put a check by the ones you believe. Why, you might find that you are a Buddhist-Christian-Existentialist or a Taoist-new age-materialist. Place yourself in the cosmology of the beliefs of the world. Many have found this self-inquiry satisfying, others awesomely revealing.

Pilgrim, pilgrimage and road—it was but myself toward my Self, and your arrival was but myself at my own door

SUFI MYSTIC, JALAL AL-DIN RUMI (1207–73)







Hinduism

## Hinduism

**FOUNDED** Hinduism, the world's oldest religion, has no beginning—it predates recorded history.

**FOUNDER** Hinduism has no human founder.

**MAJOR SCRIPTURES:** The *Vedas*, *Āgamas* and more.

**ADHERENTS:** Nearly one billion, mostly in India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, Malaysia, Indonesia, Indian Ocean, Africa, Europe and North and South America.

**SECTS:** There are four main denominations: Śaivism, Śāktism, Vaiṣṇavism and Smārtism.

### SYNOPSIS

Hinduism is a vast and profound religion. It worships one Supreme Reality (called by many names) and teaches that all souls ultimately realize Truth. There is no eternal hell, no damnation. It accepts all genuine spiritual paths—from pure monism (“God alone exists”) to theistic dualism (“When shall I know His Grace?”). Each soul is free to find his own way, whether by devotion, austerity, meditation (*yoga*) or selfless service. Stress is placed on temple worship, scripture and the *guru-disciple* tradition. Festivals, pilgrimage, chanting of holy hymns and home worship are dynamic practices. Love, nonviolence, good conduct and the law of *dharma* define the Hindu path. Hinduism explains that the soul reincarnates until all *karmas* are resolved and God Realization is attained. The magnificent holy temples, the peaceful piety of the Hindu home, the subtle metaphysics and the science of *yoga* all play their part. Hinduism is a mystical religion, leading the devotee to personally experience the Truth within, finally reaching the pinnacle of consciousness where man and God are one.

## GOALS OF THE FOUR MAJOR HINDU SECTS

**ŚAIVISM** The primary goal of Śaivism is realizing one's identity with God Śiva, in perfect union and nondifferentiation. This is termed *nirvikalpa samādhi*, Self Realization, and may be attained in this life, granting *moksha*, permanent liberation from the cycles of birth and death. A secondary goal is *savikalpa samādhi*, the realization of Satchidānanda, a unitive experience within superconsciousness in which perfect Truth, knowledge and bliss are known. The soul's final destiny is *viśvagrāsa*, total merger in God Śiva.

**ŚĀKTISM** The primary goal of Śāktism is *moksha*, defined as complete identification with God Śiva. A secondary goal for the Śāktas is to perform good works selflessly so that one may go, on death, to the heaven worlds and thereafter enjoy a good birth on earth, for heaven, too, is a transitory state. For Śāktas, God is both the formless Absolute (Śiva) and the manifest Divine (Śakti), worshiped as Pārvatī, Durgā, Kālī, Amman, Rājarājeśvarī, etc. Emphasis is given to the feminine manifest by which the masculine Unmanifest is ultimately reached.

**VAISHNAVISM** The primary goal of Vaishnavites is *videha mukti*, liberation—attainable only after death—when the small self realizes union with God Vishnu's body as a part of Him, yet maintains its pure individual personality. Lord Vishnu—all-pervasive consciousness—is the soul of the universe, distinct from the world and from the *jīvas*, "embodied souls," which constitute His body. His transcendent Being is a celestial form residing in the city of Vaikuntha, the home of all eternal values and perfection, where the soul joins Him upon *mukti*, liberation. A secondary goal—the experience of God's Grace—can be reached while yet embodied through taking refuge in Vishnu's unbounded love. By loving and serving Vishnu and meditating upon Him and His incarnations, our spiritual hunger grows and we experience His Grace flooding our whole being.

**SMĀRTISM** The ultimate goal of Smārtas is *moksha*, to realize oneself as Brahman—the Absolute and only Reality—and become free from *samsāra*, the cycles of birth and death. For this, one must conquer the state of *avidyā*, or ignorance, which causes the world to appear as real. All illusion has vanished for the realized being, Jivanmukta, even as he lives out life in the physical body. At death, his inner and outer bodies are extinguished. Brahman alone exists.

### PATHS OF ATTAINMENT

**ŚAIVISM** The path for Śaivites is divided into four progressive stages of belief and practice called *charyā*, *kriyā*, *yoga* and *jñāna*. The soul evolves through *karma* and reincarnation from the instinctive-intellectual sphere into virtuous and moral living, then into temple worship and devotion, followed by internalized worship or *yoga* and its meditative disciplines. Union with God Śiva comes through the grace of the *satguru* and culminates in the soul's maturity in the state of *jñāna*, or wisdom. Śaivism values both *bhakti* and *yoga*, devotional and contemplative *sādhana*s.

**ŚĀKTISM** The spiritual practices in Śāktism are similar to those in Śaivism, though there is more emphasis in Śāktism on God's Power as opposed to Being, on *mantras* and *yantras*, and on embracing apparent opposites: male-female, absolute-relative, pleasure-pain, cause-effect, mind-body. Certain sects within Śāktism undertake "left-hand" *tantric* rites, consciously using the world of form to transmute and eventually transcend that world. The "left-hand" approach is somewhat occult in nature; it is considered a path for the few, not the many. The "right-hand" path is more conservative in nature.

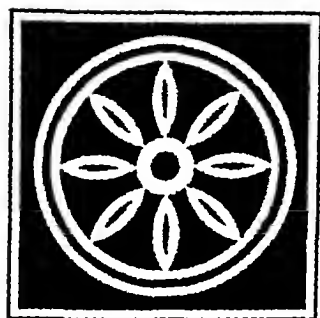
**VAISHNAVISM** Most Vaishnavites believe that religion is the performance of *bhakti sādhana*s, and that man can communicate with and receive the grace of Lord Vishnu who manifests through the temple Deity, or idol. The path of

*karma yoga* and *jñāna yoga* leads to *bhakti yoga*. Among the highest practices of all Vaishnavites is chanting the holy names of the Avatāras, Vishnu's incarnations, such as Rāma and Krishna. Through total self-surrender, called *prapatti*, to Lord Vishnu, liberation from *samsāra* is attained.

**SMĀRTISM** Most Smārta-Liberal Hindus believe that *moksha* is achieved through *jñāna yoga* alone—defined as an intellectual and meditative but *non-kundalinī-yoga* path. *Jñāna yoga*'s progressive stages are scriptural study (*śrāvana*), reflection (*manana*) and sustained meditation (*dhyāna*). Guided by a realized *guru* and avowed to the unreality of the world, the initiate meditates on himself as Brahman to break through the illusion of *māyā*. Devotees may also choose from three other non-successive paths to cultivate devotion, accrue good *karma* and purify the mind. These are *bhakti yoga*, *karma yoga* and *rāja yoga*, which certain Smārtas teach can also bring enlightenment.

## HINDU BELIEFS

- 1 I believe in a one, all-pervasive Supreme Being who is both immanent and transcendent, both Creator and Unmanifest Reality
- 2 I believe that the universe undergoes endless cycles of creation, preservation and dissolution
- 3 I believe that all souls are evolving toward union with God and will ultimately find *moksha* spiritual knowledge and liberation from the cycle of rebirth Not a single soul will be eternally deprived of this destiny
- 4 I believe in *karma*, the law of cause and effect by which each individual creates his own destiny by his thoughts, words and deeds
- 5 I believe that the soul reincarnates, evolving through many births until all *karmas* have been resolved
- 6 I believe that divine beings exist in unseen worlds and that temple worship, rituals, sacraments as well as personal devotionals create a communion with these *devas* and Gods
- 7 I believe that a spiritually awakened master or *satguru* is essential to know the transcendent Absolute, as are personal discipline, good conduct, purification, self-inquiry and meditation
- 8 I believe that all life is sacred, to be loved and revered, and therefore practice *ahimsā*, or nonviolence
- 9 I believe that no particular religion teaches the only way to salvation above all others, but that all genuine religious paths are facets of God's pure love and light, deserving tolerance and understanding



**Buddhism**



## Buddhism

**FOUNDED** Buddhism began about 2,500 years ago in India  
**FOUNDER** Gautama Siddhartha, or the Buddha, "Enlightened One"

**MAJOR SCRIPTURES** The *Tripitaka*, *Anguttara-Nikaya*, *Dhammapada*, *Sutta-Nipatta*, *Samyutta-Nikaya* and many others

**ADHERENTS** Over 300 million throughout China, Japan, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Burma, Indochina, Korea and Tibet.

**SECTS** Buddhism today is divided into three main sects—Theravada, Tibetan and Mahāyāna. Zen Buddhism, well-known in the West, is a Japanese Mahāyāna school

### SYNOPSIS

The goal of life is *nirvāna* (salvation) Toward that end, the Buddha's essential teachings are contained in the Four Noble Truths

- 1 The noble truth of suffering life is pain Being born is pain, growing old is pain, sickness is pain, death is pain Union with what we dislike is pain, separation from what we like is pain, not obtaining what we desire is pain This is the essential nature of life
- 2 The noble truth of the cause of pain it is the force of desire that leads to rebirth and further suffering, accompanied by delight and passion
- 3 The noble truth of the cessation of pain the complete cessation of desires, the forsaking, relinquishing and detaching of ourselves from desire and craving will automatically end the round of pleasure-pain, the wheel of birth and rebirth
- 4 The noble truth of the path that leads to the cessation of pain this is the Noble Eightfold Path, namely, right belief, right thought, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness and right meditation

## GOALS OF BUDDHISM

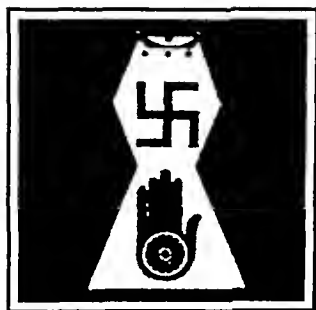
The primary goal of the Buddhists is *nirvāṇa*, defined as the end of change, and literally meaning “to blow out” as one blows out a candle. The Theravada and Tibetan traditions describe the indescribable as “peace and tranquility,” while the Mahāyāna tradition (which includes Zen) views it as “neither existence nor nonexistence,” “emptiness and the unchanging essence of the Buddha,” and “ultimate Reality.” It is synonymous with release from the bonds of desire, ego, suffering and rebirth. Buddha never defined the term, except to say, “There is an unborn, an unoriginated, an unmade, an uncompounded,” and it lies beyond the experiences of the senses. *Nirvāṇa* is not a state of annihilation, but of peace and reality. As with Jainism, Buddhism has no creator God and thus no union with Him.

## PATH OF ATTAINMENT

Buddhism takes its followers through progressive stages, termed *dhyāna*, *samapatti* and *samādhi*. *Dhyāna* is meditation, which leads to moral and intellectual purification, and to detachment which leads to pure consciousness. The *samapattis*, or further *dhyānas*, lead through a progressive nullification of psychic, mental and emotional activity to a state which is perfect solitude, neither perception nor nonperception. This leads further to *samādhi*, the attainment of supernatural consciousness and, finally, entrance into the unspeakable *nirvāṇa*. Many Buddhists understand the ultimate destiny and goal to be a heaven of bliss where one can enjoy eternity with the Bodhisattvas.

### BUDDHIST BELIEFS

- 1 I believe that the Supreme is completely transcendent and can be described as *Sūnya*, a void or state of nonbeing
- 2 I believe in the Four Noble Truths 1 that suffering exists, 2 that desire is the cause of suffering, 3 that suffering may be ended by the annihilation of desire, 4 that to end desire one must follow the Eight-Fold Path
- 3 I believe in the Eight-Fold Path of right belief, right aims, right speech, right actions, right occupation, right endeavor, right mindfulness and right meditation
- 4 I believe that life's aim is to end suffering through the annihilation of individual existence and absorption into *nirvāṇa*, the Real
- 5 I believe in the "Middle Path," living moderately, avoiding extremes of luxury and asceticism
- 6 I believe in the greatness of self-giving love and compassion toward all creatures that live, for these contain merit exceeding the giving of offerings to the Gods
- 7 I believe in the sanctity of the Buddha and in the sacred scriptures of Buddhism the *Tripitaka* (Three Baskets of Wisdom) and-or the *Mahāyāna Sūtras*
- 8 I believe that man's true nature is divine and eternal, yet his individuality is subject to the change that affects all forms and is therefore transient, dissolving at liberation into *nirvāṇa*
- 9 I believe in *dharma* (the Way), *karma* (cause and effect), reincarnation, the *sanga* (brotherhood of seekers) and the passage on earth as an opportunity to end the cycle of birth and death



**Jainism**

## Jainism

**FOUNDED** Jainism began about 2,500 years ago in India.

**FOUNDER** Nataputta Vardhamana, known as Mahāvīra, “great hero”

**MAJOR SCRIPTURES** The *Jain Āgamas* and *Siddhāntas*

**ADHERENTS** About six million, almost exclusively in Central and South India, especially in Bombay

**SECTS** There are two sects. The Dīgambara (“sky-clad”) sect holds that a saint should own nothing, not even clothes, thus their practice of wearing only a loincloth. They believe that salvation in this birth is not possible for women. The Svetāmbara (“white-robed”) sect disagrees with these points.

### SYNOPSIS

Jainism strives for the realization of the highest perfection of man, which in its original purity is free from all pain and the bondage of birth and death. The term *Jain* is derived from the Sanskrit *jina*, “conqueror,” and implies conquest over this bondage imposed by the phenomenal world. Jainism does not consider it necessary to recognize a God or any being higher than the perfect man. Souls are beginningless and endless, eternally individual. It classes souls into three broad categories: those that are not yet evolved, those in the process of evolution and those that are liberated, free from rebirth. Jainism has strong monastic-ascetic leanings, even for householders. Its supreme ideal is *ahimsā*, equal kindness and reverence for all life. The *Jain Āgamas* teach great reverence for all forms of life, strict codes of vegetarianism, asceticism, nonviolence even in self-defense, and opposition to war. Jainism is, above all, a religion of love and compassion.

## THE GOALS OF JAINISM

The primary goal of the Jains is becoming a Paramātmā, a perfected soul. This is accomplished when all layers of *karma*, which is viewed as a substance, are removed, leading the soul to rise to the ceiling of the universe, from darkness to light, where, beyond the Gods and all currents of transmigration, the soul abides forever in the solitary bliss of *moksha*. *Moksha* is defined in Jainism as liberation, self-unity and integration, pure aloneness and endless calm, freedom from action and desire, freedom from *karma* and rebirth. *Moksha* is attainable in this world or at the time of death. When it is reached, man has fulfilled his destiny as the man-God. For the Jains there is no creator God and, therefore, no communion with Him. The nature of the soul is pure consciousness, power, bliss and omniscience.

## PATH OF ATTAINMENT

The soul passes through various stages of spiritual development, called *gunasthānas*, progressive manifestations of the innate faculties of knowledge and power accompanied by decreasing sinfulness and increasing purity. Souls attain better births according to the amount of personal *karma* they are able to eliminate during life. Between births, souls dwell in one of the seven hells, the sixteen heavens or fourteen celestial regions. Liberated souls abide at the top of the universe. All Jains take five vows, but it is the monk who practices celibacy and poverty. Jainism places great stress on *ahimsā*, asceticism, *yoga* and monasticism as the means of attainment. Temple *pūjās* are performed to the twenty-four Tirthankaras or spiritual preceptors, literally “ford-crossers,” those who take others across the ocean of *samsāra*.

## JAIN BELIEFS

- 1 I believe in the spiritual lineage of the 24 Tīrthankaras (“ford-finders”) of whom the ascetic sage Mahāvīra was the last—that they should be revered and worshiped above all else
- 2 I believe in the sacredness of all life, that one must cease injury to sentient creatures, large and small, and that even unintentional killing creates *karma*
- 3 I believe that God is neither Creator, Father nor Friend. Such human conceptions are limited. All that may be said of Him is: He is.
- 4 I believe that each man’s soul is eternal and individual and that each must conquer himself by his own efforts and subordinate the worldly to the heavenly in order to attain *moksha*, or release.
- 5 I believe the conquest of oneself can only be achieved in ascetic discipline and strict religious observance, and that nonascetics and women will have their salvation in another life.
- 6 I believe that the principle governing the successions of life is *karma*, that our actions, both good and bad, bind us and that *karma* may only be consumed by purification, penance and austerity.
- 7 I believe in the *Jain Āgamas* and *Siddhāntas* as the sacred scriptures that guide man’s moral and spiritual life.
- 8 I believe in the Three Jewels: right knowledge, right faith and right conduct.
- 9 I believe the ultimate goal of *moksha* is eternal release from *samsāra*, the “wheel of birth and death,” and the concomitant attainment of Supreme Knowledge.



**Sikhism**



## Sikhism

**FOUNDED** Sikhism began about 500 years ago in Northern India, now the country of Pakistan

**FOUNDER** Guru Nānak

**MAJOR SCRIPTURE.** The *Ādi Granth*, revered as the present *guru* of the faith

**ADHERENTS** Estimated at nine million, mostly in India's state of Punjab

**SECTS** Besides the *Khalsa*, there are the Ram Raiyas in Uttara Pradesh and two groups that have living *gurus*—Mandharis and Nirankaris

### SYNOPSIS

The Muslims began their invasions of India some 1,200 years ago. As a result of Islam's struggle with Hindu religion and culture, leaders sought a reconciliation between the two faiths, a middle path that embraced both Sikhism (from *sikka*, meaning "disciple") united Hindu *bhakti* and Sufi mysticism most successfully. Sikhism began as a peaceful religion and patiently bore much persecution from the Muslims, but with the tenth *guru*, Gobind Singh, self-preservation forced a strong militarism aimed at protecting the faith and way of life against severe opposition. Sikhism stresses the importance of devotion, intense faith in the *guru*, the repetition of God's name (*nām*) as a means of salvation, opposition to the worship of idols, the brotherhood of all men and rejection of caste differences (though certain caste attitudes persist today). There have been no *gurus* in the main Sikh tradition since Guru Gobind Singh, whose last instructions to followers were to honor and cherish the teachings of the ten *gurus* as embodied in the scripture, *Ādi Granth*.

## THE GOALS OF SIKHISM

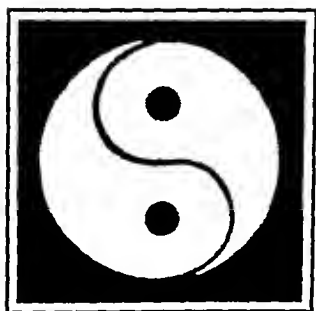
The goal of Sikhism lies in *moksha* which is release and union with God, described as that of a lover with the beloved and resulting in self-transcendence, egolessness and enduring bliss, or *ānanda*. The Sikh is immersed in God, assimilated, identified with Him. It is the fulfillment of individuality in which man, freed of all limitations, becomes co-extensive and co-operant and co-present with God. In Sikhism, *moksha* means release into God's love. Man is not God, but is fulfilled in unitary, mystical consciousness with Him. God is the Personal Lord and Creator.

## PATH OF ATTAINMENT

To lead man to the goal of *moksha*, Sikhism follows a path of *japa* and hymns. Through chanting of the Holy Names, Sat Nām, the soul is cleansed of its impurity, the ego is conquered and the wandering mind is stilled. This leads to a superconscious stillness. From here one enters into the divine light and thus attains the state of divine bliss. Once this highest goal is attained, the devotee must devote his awareness to the good of others. The highest goal can be realized only by God's grace, and this is obtained exclusively by following the *satguru* (or nowadays a *sant* or saint, since there are no living *gurus*) and by repeating the holy names of the Lord guided by the *Ādi Granth*, the scripture and sole repository of spiritual authority. For Sikhs there is no Deity worship, no symbol of Divinity.

## SIKH BELIEFS

- 1 I believe in God as the sovereign One, the omnipotent, immortal and personal Creator, a being beyond time, who is called Sat Nām, for His name is Truth
- 2 I believe that man grows spiritually by living truthfully, serving selflessly and by repetition of the Holy Name and Guru Nānak's Prayer, *Japaji*
- 3 I believe that salvation lies in understanding the divine Truth and that man's surest path lies in faith, love, purity and devotion
- 4 I believe in the scriptural and ethical authority of the *Ādi Granth* as God's revelation.
- 5 I believe that to know God the *guru* is essential as the guide who, himself absorbed in love of the Real, is able to awaken the soul to its true, divine nature
- 6 I believe in the line of ten Sikh *gurus*. Guru Nānak, Guru Angad, Guru Amardas, Guru Rām Dās, Guru Arjan, Guru Har Govind, Guru Har Rai, Guru Har Krishnan and Guru Tegh Bahadur—all these are my teachers
- 7 I believe that the world is *māyā*, a vain and transitory illusion, only God is true as all else passes away
- 8 I believe in adopting the last name "Singh," meaning "lion" and signifying courage, and in the five symbols 1) white dress (purity), 2) sword (bravery), 3) iron bracelet (morality), 4) uncut hair and beard (renunciation), and 5) comb (cleanliness)
- 9 I believe in the natural path and stand opposed to fasting, vegetarianism, pilgrimage, caste, idolatry, celibacy and asceticism



**Taoism**

## Taoism

**FOUNDED** Taoism began about 2,500 years ago in China  
**FOUNDER** Lao-tzu, whom Confucius described as a dragon riding the wind and clouds.

**MAJOR SCRIPTURE:** The *Tao-te-Ching*, or "Book of Reason and Virtue," is among the shortest of all scriptures, containing only 5,000 words. Also central are the sacred writings of Chuang-tsu.

**ADHERENTS.** Estimated at 50 million, mostly in China and other parts of Asia.

**SECTS** Taoism is a potentially mystical tradition, so interpretations have been diverse and its sects are many.

### SYNOPSIS

The Tao, or Way, has never been put down in words; rather it is left for the seeker to discover within. Lao-tzu himself wrote, "The Tao that can be named is not the eternal Tao." Taoism is concerned with man's spiritual level of being, and in the *Tao-te-Ching* the awakened man is compared to bamboo: upright, simple and useful outside—and hollow inside. Effulgent emptiness is the spirit of Tao, but no words will capture its spontaneity, its eternal newness. Adherents of the faith are taught to see the Tao everywhere, in all beings and in all things. Taoist shrines are the homes of divine beings who guide the religion, bless and protect worshippers. A uniquely Taoist concept is *wu-wei*, nonaction. This does not mean no action, but rather not exceeding spontaneous action that accords with needs as they naturally arise, not indulging in calculated action and not acting so as to exceed the very minimum required for effective results. If we keep still and listen to the inner promptings of the Tao, we shall act effortlessly, efficiently, hardly giving the matter a thought. We will be ourselves, as we are.

## THE GOALS OF TAOISM

The primary goal of Taoism may be described as the mystical intuition of the Tao, which is the Way, the Primal Meaning, the Undivided Unity, the Ultimate Reality. Both immanent and transcendent, the Tao is the natural way of all beings, it is the nameless beginning of heaven and earth, and it is the mother of all things. All things depend upon the Tao, all things return to it. Yet it lies hidden, transmitting its power and perfection to all things. He who has realized the Tao has uncovered the layers of consciousness so that he arrives at pure consciousness and sees the inner truth of everything. Only one who is free of desire can apprehend the Tao, thereafter leading a life of "actionless activity." There is no Personal God in Taoism, and thus no union with Him. There are three worlds and beings within them, and worship is part of the path.

## PATH OF ATTAINMENT

One who follows the Tao follows the natural order of things, not seeking to improve upon nature or to legislate virtue to others. The Taoist observes *wu-wei*, or nondoing, like water which without effort seeks and finds its proper level. This path includes purifying oneself through stilling the appetites and the emotions, accomplished in part through meditation, breath control and other forms of inner discipline, generally under a master. The foremost practice is goodness or naturalness, and detachment from the Ten Thousand Things of the world.

## TAOIST BELIEFS

1. I believe that the Eternal may be understood as the Tao, or "Way," which embraces the moral and physical order of the universe, the path of virtue which Heaven itself follows, and the Absolute—yet so great is it that "the Tao that can be described is not the Eternal Tao."
2. I believe in the unique greatness of the sage Lao-tsu and in his disciple Chuang-tsu
3. I believe in the scriptural insights and final authority of the *Tao-te-Ching* and in the sacredness of Chuang-tsu's writings.
4. I believe that man aligns himself with the Eternal when he observes humility, simplicity, gentle yielding, serenity and effortless action.
5. I believe that the goal and the path of life are essentially the same, and that the Tao can be known only to exalted beings who realize it themselves—reflections of the Beyond are of no avail.
6. I believe the omniscient and impersonal Supreme is implacable, beyond concern for human woe, but that there exist lesser Divinities—from the high Gods who endure for eons, to the nature spirits and demons.
7. I believe that all actions create their opposing forces, and the wise will seek inaction in action.
8. I believe that man is one of the Ten Thousand Things of manifestation, is finite and will pass; only the Tao endures forever.
9. I believe in the oneness of all creation, in the spirituality of the material realms and in the brotherhood of all men



**Confucianism**



## Confucianism

**FOUNDED** Confucianism began about 2,500 years ago in China

**FOUNDER** Supreme Sage K'ung-fu-tsu (Confucius) and Second Sage Meng-tzu (Mencius)

**MAJOR SCRIPTURES** *The Analects, Doctrine of the Mean, Great Learning and Mencius*

**ADHERENTS** Estimated at 350 million, mostly in China, Japan, Burma and Thailand

**SECTS** There are no formal sects within Confucianism Followers are free to profess other religions yet still be Confucianists

### SYNOPSIS

Confucianism is, and has been for over 25 centuries, the dominant philosophical system in China and the guiding light in almost every aspect of Chinese life. Confucius and his followers traveled throughout the many feudal states of the Chinese empire, persuading rulers to adopt his social reforms. They did not offer a point-by-point program, but stressed instead the "Way," or "One Thread," Jen (also translated as "humanity or love"), that runs through all Confucius' teachings. They urged individuals to strive for perfect virtue, righteousness (called Yi) and improvement of character. They taught the importance of harmony in the family, order in the state and peace in the empire, which they saw as inherently interdependent. Teachings emphasize a code of conduct, self-cultivation and propriety—and thus the attainment of social and national order. Stress is more on human duty and the ideal of the "superior man" than on a divine or supramundane Reality. Still, Confucius fasted, worshiped the ancestors, attended sacrifices and sought to live in harmony with Heaven. Confucianism is now enjoying a renaissance in China.

### THE GOALS OF CONFUCIANISM

The primary goal of Confucianism is to create a true nobility through proper education and the inculcation of all the virtues. It is described as the return to the way of one's ancestors, and the classics are studied to discover the ancient way of virtue. Spiritual nobility is attainable by all men, it is a moral achievement. Confucius accepted the Tao, but placed emphasis on this return to an idealized age and the cultivation of the superior man, on the pragmatic rather than the mystical. The superior man's greatest virtue is benevolent love. The other great virtues are duty, wisdom, truth and propriety. Salvation is seen as realizing and living one's natural goodness, which is endowed by heaven through education. The superior man always knows the right and follows his knowledge.

### PATH OF ATTAINMENT

Besides virtue, the five relationships offer the follower of Confucianism the means for progressing. These five relationships are to his ruler, his father, his wife, his elder brother and his friend. Ancestors are revered in Confucianism, and it is assumed that their spirit survives death. With respect to a Deity, Confucius was himself an agnostic, preferring to place emphasis on the ethical life here rather than to speak of a spiritual life beyond earthly existence, guiding men's minds not to the future, but to the present and the past.

## CONFUCIAN BELIEFS

- 1 I believe in the presence of the Supreme Ruler in all things, and in Heaven as the Ethical Principle whose law is order, impersonal and yet interested in mankind
- 2 I believe that the purpose of life is to pursue an orderly and reverent existence in accord with *Li*, propriety or virtue, so as to become the Superior Man
- 3 I believe in the Golden Rule "Never do to others what you would not like them to do to you"
- 4 I believe that Confucius, China's First Sage, is the Master of Life whose teachings embody the most profound understanding of earth and Heaven, and that Mencius is China's Second Sage
- 5 I believe in the writings of Confucius as scriptural truth and in the Four Sacred Books *The Analects, Doctrine of the Mean, Great Learning, and Mencius*
- 6 I believe that each man has five relationships, entailing five duties to his fellow man to his ruler, to his father, to his wife, to his elder brother and to his friend—the foremost being his familial duties
- 7 I believe that human nature is inherently good, and evil is an unnatural condition arising from inharmony
- 8 I believe that man is master of his own life and fate, free to conduct himself as he will, and that he should cultivate qualities of benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom and sincerity
- 9 I believe that the family is the most essential institution among men, and that religion should support the family and the state



# Shintoism

## Shintoism

**FOUNDED** Shintoism began around 2,500–3,000 years ago  
**FOUNDER.** Each of the thirteen ancient sects has its own founder

**MAJOR SCRIPTURES** *Kokiyi* (Record of Ancient Things), *Nikongi* (Chronicles of Japan), a later work, *Yengishiki* (Institutes of the period of Yengi), and the *Collection of 10,000 Leaves* are the primary works, but they are not regarded as revealed scripture

**ADHERENTS** Estimated at 30 million, mostly in Japan Most are also Buddhists

### SYNOPSIS

There are two main divisions One is the thirteen ancient sects, all very similar The second is known as State Shinto, and is a later synthesis finding its highest expression in the worship of the Emperor and loyalty to the State and family Shinto (from the Chinese characters *Shin* and *Tao*, signifying the “Way of the Spirits”) is called *Kami-no-michi* in its native Japan *Kami* are the many Gods or nature spirits Shinto shrines are many, over 100,000 in Japan In the shrines no images are worshiped, rather it is considered that the *Kami* themselves are there Fresh foods, water, incense, etc., are offered daily upon the altar There is an inward belief in the sacredness of the whole of the universe, that man can be in tune with this sacredness Stress is placed on truthfulness and purification through which man may remove the “dust” which conceals his inherently divine nature and thus receive the guidance and blessings of *Kami* The Shintoist’s ardent love of the motherland has found unique expression in the loyalty and devotion of the Japanese people to their state institutions

## THE GOALS OF SHINTOISM

The primary goal of Shintoism is to achieve immortality among the ancestral beings, the Kami. Kami is understood by the Shintoist as a supernatural, holy power living in or connected to the world of the spirit. All living things possess a Kami nature. Man's nature is the highest, for he possesses the most Kami. Salvation is living in the spirit world with these divine beings, the Kami.

## PATH OF ATTAINMENT

Salvation is achieved in Shinto through observance of all tabus and the avoidance of persons and objects which might cause impurity or pollution. Prayers are made and offerings brought to the temples of the Gods and Goddesses, of which there are said to be 800 myriad in the universe. Man has no Supreme God to obey, but needs only know how to adjust to Kami in its various manifestations. A person's Kami nature survives death, and a man naturally desires to be worthy of being remembered with approbation by his descendants. Therefore, fulfillment of duty is a most important aspect of Shinto.

## SHINTO BELIEFS

- 1 I believe in the "Way of the Gods," Kami-no-michi, which asserts nature's sacredness and uniquely reveals the supernatural
- 2 I believe there is not a single Supreme Being, but myriad Gods, superior beings, among all the wonders of the universe which is not inanimate but filled everywhere with sentient life
- 3 I believe in the scriptural authority of the great books known as the *Record of Ancient Things*, *Chronicles of Japan*, *Institutes of the Period of Yengi* and *Collection of 10,000 Leaves*
- 4 I believe in the sanctity of cleanliness and purity—of body and spirit—and that impurity is a religious transgression
- 5 I believe that the State is a divine institution whose laws should not be transgressed and to which individuals must sacrifice their own needs
- 6 I believe in moral and spiritual uprightness as the cornerstone of religious ethics and in the supreme value of loyalty
- 7 I believe that the supernatural reveals itself through all that is natural and beautiful, and value these above philosophical or theological doctrine
- 8 I believe that whatever is, is Divine Spirit, that the world is a one brotherhood, that all men are capable of deep affinity with the Divine and that there exists no evil in the world whatsoever
- 9 I believe in the practical use of ceremony and ritual, and in the worship of the Deities that animate nature, including the Sun Goddess, Star God and Storm God



# Zoroastrianism



## Zoroastrianism

**FOUNDED.** Zoroastrianism began 2,600 years ago in ancient Iran.

**FOUNDER:** Spenta Zarathustra

**MAJOR SCRIPTURE** Portions of the *Zend Avesta* (Persian).

**ADHERENTS** 125,000, mostly near Bombay, where they are called Parsis

**SECTS.** The present-day sects are two, having split over a question of calendar

### SYNOPSIS

Two principles form the basis of Zoroastrian ethics: the maintenance of life and the struggle against evil. In order to maintain life, one must till the soil, raise cattle, marry and have children. Asceticism and celibacy are condemned, purity and avoidance of defilement (from death, demons, etc ) are valued. In order to combat evil, one must at all times oppose the forces of evil and people who side with them. Zoroastrianism stresses monotheism, while recognizing the universal sway of two opposite forces. The powers of good are led by Ahura Mazda (the Wise Lord) and the forces of evil by Angra Mainyu or Ahriman (the Evil Spirit). Each side has an array of warriors; bands of angels and archangels on one side and hosts of demons and archfiends on the other. Good will eventually triumph on Judgment Day, when a Messiah and Savior named Sayoshant will appear to punish the wicked and establish the righteous in a paradise on Earth. A central feature of the faith is the sacred fire that is constantly kept burning in every home, fueled by fragrant sandalwood. Fire is considered the only worshipful symbol, the great purifier and sustainer, of the nature of the sun itself.

## THE GOALS OF ZOROASTRIANISM

The goal of Zoroastrianism is to be rewarded with a place in heaven where the soul will be with God, called Ahura Mazda, sharing His blessed existence forever

## PATH OF ATTAINMENT

Man's life, according to Zoroastrianism, is a moral struggle, not a search for knowledge or enlightenment. He is put on the earth to affirm and approve the world, not to deny it, not to escape from it. Salvation is found in obedience to the will of Ahura Mazda as revealed and taught by His prophet, Zoroaster. Man has but one life. He also has the freedom to choose between good and evil, the latter being embodied in Angra Mainyu who rebelled against God. At death, each is judged and consigned to his deserved abode.

Zoroastrians hold truth as the greatest virtue, followed by good thoughts, words and deeds. They value the ethical life most highly. Though there is a resurrection of the dead, a judgment and a kingdom of heaven on earth, followed by punishment of the wicked, all sins are eventually burned away and all of mankind exists forever with Ahura Mazda. Hell, for the Zoroastrian, is not eternal.

## ZOROASTRIAN BELIEFS

1. I believe there are two Great Beings in the universe. One, Ahura Mazda, created man and all that is good, beautiful and true, while the other, Angra Mainyu, vivifies all that is evil, ugly and destructive
2. I believe that man has free will to align himself with good or evil, and when all mankind is in harmony with the God Ahura Mazda, Angra Mainyu will be conquered.
3. I believe the soul is immortal and upon death crosses over Hell by a narrow bridge—the good crossing safely to Heaven and the evil falling into Hell.
4. I believe that a savior named Sayoshant will appear at the end of time, born of a virgin, reviving the dead, rewarding the good and punishing the evil, and thereafter Ahura Mazda will reign.
5. I believe that Zoroaster, also known as Zarathustra, is the foremost Prophet of God.
6. I believe in the scriptural authority of the *Zend Avesta*
7. I believe that purity is the first virtue, truth the second and charity the third—and that man must discipline himself by good thoughts, words and deeds
8. I believe that marriage excels continence, action excels contemplation and forgiveness excels revenge.
9. I believe in God as Seven Persons: Eternal Light; Right and Justice; Goodness and Love; Strength of Spirit; Piety and Faith, Health and Perfection; and Immortality—and that He may best be worshiped through the representation of fire.



**Judaism**

## Judaism

**FOUNDED** Judaism began about 3,700 years ago in Egypt-Canaan, now Israel

**FOUNDERS** Abraham, who started the lineage, and Moses, who emancipated the enslaved Jewish tribes from Egypt.

**MAJOR SCRIPTURE** The *Torah* (the first five books of the *Old Testament*, and the *Talmud*)

**ADHERENTS** About 12 million worldwide, over half in the United States

**SECTS** Jews are divided into Orthodox, Conservative and Reform sects, with other regional and ethnic divisions

### SYNOPSIS

The religion of the Jews is inseparable from their history as a people. Much of the *Torah* traces the ancestry of Abraham through Isaac, Jacob, Joseph and finally to Moses, the foremost of God's prophets in Hebrew history. It was Moses who gave Judaism the Ten Commandments and established the religious laws and traditions.

By far the most profound characteristic of Judaism is its strict monotheism. The Jews hold an unshakable belief in one God and one God only, whom they call Yahweh, from whom all creation flows. The Jewish people consider themselves a chosen people, apart from all the other peoples of the earth, by virtue of their covenant with Yahweh.

Much stress is placed on the hallowing of daily existence, worship in the synagogue, prayer and reading of the scriptures. Few religions can boast of such a close-knit family tradition as Judaism, making the home a great strength to the religion and a constant refuge to the faithful. Each day, morning and evening, every devout Jew affirms his faith by repeating Moses' prayer: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One."

### THE GOALS OF JUDAISM

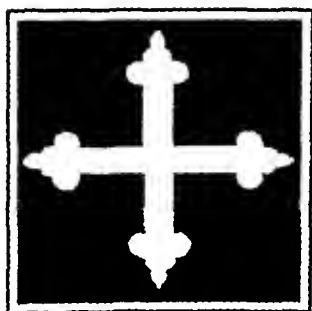
The goal of Judaism lies in the strict obedience to the *Torah*, Jewish scripture, which can alleviate the plight of the individual and of society. Obeying God's law brings rewards in the future life when the Messiah will come to overthrow evil and reward the righteous in God's kingdom on the earth, the Day of the Lord. The soul thereafter will enjoy God's presence and love.

### PATH OF ATTAINMENT

Man has two impulses: good and evil. He can either follow God's law or rebel and be influenced by Satan, who caused God's creation to go astray. It is the highest morality, possible through obedience to the *Torah*, which pleases God. One must follow justice, charity, ethics and honesty, being true to the one true God, Yahweh.

## JUDAIC BELIEFS

- 1 I believe in the One God and Creator who is incorporeal and transcendent, beyond the limitation of form, yet who cares for the world and its creatures, rewarding the good and punishing the evil
- 2 I believe in the Prophets, of which Moses was God's foremost, and in the Commandments revealed to him by God on Mount Sinai as man's highest law
- 3 I believe in the *Torah* as God's word and scripture, composed of the five *Old Testament* books and the *Talmud*. They are God's only immutable law
- 4 I believe that upon death the soul goes to Heaven (or to Hell first if it has been sinful), that one day the Messiah will appear on earth and there will be a Day of Judgment, and the dead shall physically arise to Life Everlasting
- 5 I believe that the universe is not eternal, but was created by and will be destroyed by God
- 6 I believe that no priest should intervene in the relationship of man and God, nor should God be represented in any form, nor should any being be worshiped other than the One God, Yahweh
- 7 I believe in man's spiritualization through adherence to the law, justice, charity and honesty
- 8 I believe that God has established a unique spiritual covenant with the Hebrew people to uphold for mankind the highest standards of monotheism and piety
- 9 I believe in the duty of the family to make the home a House of God through devotions and ritual, prayers, sacred festivals and observation of the Holy Day



**Christianity**



## Christianity

**FOUNDED** Christianity began about 2,000 years ago in what is now Israel

**FOUNDER** Jesus of Nazareth

**MAJOR SCRIPTURE** *The Bible, Old and New Testaments*

**ADHERENTS** Estimated at 1.5 billion

**SECTS** Christianity is divided into three main sects: Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox and Protestant. Among Protestants there are over 20,000 denominations.

### SYNOPSIS

The majority of Christians adhere to the Apostles' Creed: "I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth, and Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried. He descended into Hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended unto Heaven and sitteth on the right hand of God, the Father Almighty. From thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting." Most Christian faith revolves around the basic principles of this creed, but with important exceptions to its various beliefs. Christianity has an unswerving conviction that it is the only true religion, the only path to salvation. This engenders a missionary zeal, an urgency to evangelize around the world.

Stress is placed on acceptance of Jesus as God and Savior, on good conduct, compassion, service to mankind, faith and preparation for the Final Judgment. Only good Christians will be saved and accepted into heaven. Today over half of all Christians are black. Membership is diminishing in developed nations but increasing in undeveloped nations.

## THE GOALS OF CHRISTIANITY

The goal of Christianity is eternal life with God in heaven, a perfect existence in which God's glory and bliss are shared. It is also a personal life, enjoyed differently by souls according to the amount of grace achieved in life.

## PATH OF ATTAINMENT

Man's plight is caused by disobedience to God's will. Man needs redemption from the forces which would enslave and destroy him—fear, selfishness, hopelessness, desire and the supernatural forces of the Devil, sin and death against which he is powerless. His salvation comes only through faith in Jesus Christ, that is, in acceptance of Jesus' resurrection from the dead as proof of God's power over the forces of sin and death. The good Christian lives a life of virtue and obedience to God out of gratitude to God for sacrificing Jesus for the sins of all who come to accept Jesus Christ as personal Savior and Lord. Jesus is to return again to judge the world and bring God's rule to the earth. Through following the law of God as found in the *Holy Bible* and through God's grace, man attains salvation. Those who do not achieve this blessedness are, after death, consigned to a hell of eternal suffering and damnation.

## CHRISTIAN BELIEFS

- 1 I believe in God the Father, Creator of the universe, reigning forever distinct over man, His beloved creation
- 2 I believe man is born a sinner, and that he may know salvation only through the Savior, Jesus Christ, God's only begotten Son
- 3 I believe that Jesus Christ was born of Mary, a virgin
- 4 I believe that Jesus Christ was crucified on the cross, then resurrected from the dead and now sits at the right hand of the Father as the final judge of the dead, and that He will return again as prophesied
- 5 I believe that the soul is embodied for a single lifetime, but is immortal and accountable to God for all thoughts and actions
- 6 I believe in the historical truth of the *Holy Bible*, that it is sacred scripture of the highest authority and the only word of God
- 7 I believe that upon death and according to its earthly deeds and its acceptance of the Christian faith, the soul enters Heaven, Purgatory or Hell. There it awaits the Last Judgment when the dead shall rise again, the redeemed to enjoy life everlasting and the unsaved to suffer eternally
- 8 I believe in the intrinsic goodness of mankind and the affirmative nature of life, and in the priceless value of love, charity and faith
- 9 I believe in the Holy Trinity of God who reveals Himself as Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and in the existence of Satan, the personification of evil, deception and darkness



Islam

## Islam

**FOUNDED** Islam began about 1,400 years ago in present-day Saudi Arabia

**FOUNDER** Prophet Mohammed

**MAJOR SCRIPTURES** The *Koran*

**ADHERENTS** Over one billion, mostly in the Middle East, Indonesia, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Africa, China and Eastern Europe

**SECTS** There are two main divisions within Islam. The Sunnis are followers of the political successors of Mohammed. The Shites are followers of Mohammed's family successors, all martyred at an early age

### SYNOPSIS

Islam means "submission," surrender to the will of God, called Allah. Those who submit are called Muslims. Islam is based upon five "pillars," or principle acts of faith to which every Muslim in the world adheres. These are: 1) Faith in Allah. "There is no God but Allah, and Mohammed is His Prophet." 2) Praying five times daily, kneeling in the direction of Mecca, the holy city. 3) Giving of alms: a share of each Muslim's income is given to support the mosque and the poor. 4) Fasting throughout Ramadan, the ninth month of the Muslim calendar, the faithful fast from sunrise to sunset. 5) Pilgrimage: the binding force of the peoples who have embraced Islam. At least once in life every believer must go to Mecca, the holy city. They go dressed in simple, seamless white garments.

Islam teaches absolute monotheism and Mohammed's primacy as God's last Prophet on earth. Stress is on the brotherhood of believers, nondifference of religious and secular life, obedience to God's Law, abstinence from alcohol, good conduct and the limitation of all except Allah. Today Islam is the world's fastest-growing religion.

## THE GOALS OF ISLAM

The primary goal of Islam is to enjoy eternal life, both physical and spiritual, in heaven with Allah. Heaven is a paradise in which all the joys and pleasures abound, in which one lives amid beautiful gardens and fountains, enjoying the choicest foods served by sweet maidens. Man is the noblest creation of God, ranking above the angels. It is the sacred duty of Muslims to convert others to the Islamic faith. Islam has an ardent conviction that it is the only true religion, the only path to salvation. From this belief arises an extraordinary zeal, to share the faith and to convert others. The ideal human society is an Islamic theocracy.

## PATH OF ATTAINMENT

Total submission to Allah is the single path to salvation, and even that is no guarantee, for Allah may desire even a faithful soul to experience misery. The good Muslim surrenders all pride, the chief among sins, and follows explicitly the will of Allah as revealed in the *Koran* by His last and greatest prophet, Mohammed. This and this alone brings a full and meaningful life and avoids the terrors of Hell which befall sinners and infidels. He believes in the Five Doctrines and observes the Five Pillars. The virtues of truthfulness, temperance and humility before God are foremost for Islam, and the practices of fasting, pilgrimage, prayer and charity to the Muslim community are most necessary to please Allah. The five doctrines are: 1) There is only one true God, Allah. 2) There are angels, chief of whom is Gabriel. 3) There are four inspired books: the *Torah* of Moses, the *Zabur* (Psalms) of David, the *Injil* (Evangel) of Jesus, and the *Koran*, Allah's final message, which supercedes all other scriptures. 4) There have been numerous prophets of Allah, including Mohammed, the Last Prophet. 5) There will be a final day of judgment and resurrection. A sixth but optional doctrine is belief in *kismet*, "fate or destiny."

## ISLAMIC BELIEFS

- 1 I believe that Allah is the Supreme Creator and Sustainer, all-knowing and transcendent and yet the arbiter of good and evil, the final judge of men.
2. I believe in the Five Pillars of Faith: 1) praying five times daily, 2) charity through alms-giving, 3) fasting during the ninth month, 4) pilgrimage to Holy Mecca, Saudi Arabia, and 5) profession of faith by acknowledging, "There is no God but Allah, and Mohammed is His Prophet."
3. I believe in the *Koran* as the Word of God and sacred scripture mediated through the Angel Gabriel to Mohammed.
4. I believe in the direct communion of each man with God, that all are equal in the eyes of God and therefore priests or other intercessors are unneeded
5. I believe in the pure transcendence of God, great beyond imagining—no form or idol can be worshiped in His Name.
6. I believe that the soul of man is immortal, embodied once on earth, then entering Heaven or Hell upon death according to its conduct and faith on earth.
7. I believe in the Last Judgment and that man should stand in humble awe and fear of God's wrathful and vengeful power.
8. I believe that truthfulness should be observed in all circumstances, even though it may bring injury or pain.
9. I believe that salvation is only obtained through God's grace and not through man's efforts, yet man should do good and avoid all sins, especially drunkenness, usury and gambling



**Faiths**



## Faiths

In his search of the Divine, man has created innumerable smaller “faiths” These spiritual paths are often charismatic or mystical in source or nature and have a powerful spiritual presence and purpose despite being numerically small A few examples are explored here in nine beliefs Following this, we explore some larger movements, which are not necessarily spiritual in nature, but are important currents of thought and belief which shape modern politics and society

**SPIRITUALISM:** Spiritualism holds that there is another, perhaps deeper, reality on “the other side” which can be contacted by mediums or psychics who have sufficient sensitivity It is one of the oldest forms of communion

**SHAMANISM:** This broad term includes the thousands of tribal faiths which have existed on every continent since long before recorded history Beliefs include a deep sense of the sacredness of life and of the earth, communion with spirit guides and in the ability of man to live in harmony with and influence nature

**THEOSOPHY** Founded in the late 1800s by Madame Blavatsky, Theosophy emphasizes mystical experience, esoteric doctrine and monism They seek universal brotherhood, and explore the unexplained laws of nature, and the powers latent in man

**UNIVERSALISM** Many faiths are based on universalist principles, often as a conscious effort to avoid certain doctrines which are seen as narrow or sectarian Universalism arises in all religions, whether Christian (Unitarianism), Islam (Bahá'í), Jain (Rajneeshism) or Hindu (dozens of all-religions movements, such as those of Sāī Bāba, Krishnamūrti and Mahārshī Mahesh Yogī)

## OTHER FAITHS

Among thousands of other faiths are indigenous people's tribal religions, humanitarianism, neo-Indian religion, shamanism, Anthroposophy, Swedenborgianism, Gnosticism, Neoplatonism, Scientology, Eckankar, channeling, witchcraft, Paganism, occultism, Subud, mysticism, Freemasonry, Satan worship, mysticism, Huna, Sufism, Baha'i, Rosicrucianism, Christian Science and Religious Science

### A SAMPLING OF BELIEFS OF FAITHS

- 1 I believe in the fundamental unity and common source of all religions (Baha'i and Universalism)
2. I believe man's natural spirituality is best expressed in loving and practical aid to his fellow man, rather than metaphysical inquiry (Humanitarianism)
- 3 I believe in the unity of religions, the efficacy of devotion, *sādhana* and service and in Satya Sāi Bāba as the living Incarnation of God (Saivism)
- 4 I believe that spiritual progress comes through analysis of current and past life experiences which resolve past *karma* most directly (Scientology)
- 5 I believe that there is no God beyond the Divine within man and no truth beyond existential freedom, that all religions imprison man, causing repression, fear and poverty (Rajneeshism)
- 6 I believe man's sense of the sacred can be fulfilled naturally, without formal worship, houses of God, ceremony, creeds or theology (various faiths)
- 7 I believe religion consists of unitive and direct mystical experience which should be the objective of every religious aspirant (mysticism)
- 8 I believe that the cultivation of occult powers including ESP, astral travel, past life readings, etc , is the highest pursuit of that which is spiritual (occultism)

9. I believe in the intimate relationship of man, Spirit and the earth—which is a living, sacred being—and in the brotherhood of all creatures (indigenous tribalism).

## DRUG CULTURE

“Drug culture” refers to the philosophy and way of life developed in Western societies during the 1960s. Its adherents follow a lifestyle based on the use of various natural and man-made drugs such as marijuana, hashish, peyote, mescaline, cocaine, LSD and chemical designer drugs.

## DRUG CULTURE BELIEFS

- 1 I believe that one can achieve the ultimate goal of enlightenment, as understood by any religion, through the use of drugs.
2. I believe that the psychedelic drug experience, properly handled, fulfills the role of a spiritual teacher or *guru*.
- 3 I believe that drugs give mystical experiences of various types identical to and therefore equally as valid as those achieved through *yoga*, penance, grace, etc.
- 4 I believe that the knowledge gained on drugs is more valid than the traditional knowledge given by society or religion because it is direct, personal experience of a higher order.
- 5 I believe that people who take drugs are more “aware” or “enlightened” than those who do not.
- 6 I believe that one can solve his personal psychological problems or “hangups” by taking drugs.
- 7 I believe in living simply, close to nature and in harmony with others and that sexual relationships need not be restricted by the traditional morals imposed by society.
- 8 I believe that the ideal life is to completely drop out of society, becoming self-sufficient and associating with

others of a like mind, and that those who do not drop out of society but continue to involve themselves in mundane materialism are living in a lower consciousness

9. I believe that the meaning of life is found in intense self-revelatory experiences, which can be attained through drugs that open the doors of perception to higher consciousness

### NEW AGE

The term *new age* was coined in the 1970s to denote an awakening of the mass consciousness to deeper realities and the need for individual attunement with universal, higher consciousness and creative transformation. In practice, new-age thinking embraces myriad enlightenment teachings (mostly of Eastern origin)—from crystallography to Zen, parapsychology to holistic medicine.

### NEW AGE BELIEFS

1. I believe in the one Eternal Source or Ultimate Reality, called by many names, which flows through all forms of nature and can be known through spiritual realization and experience
2. I believe in unseen worlds and beings who may interact with our world, and that some are benevolent and help guide and protect us, while others are malevolent, and that channeling, or mediumship, is a means of contacting such souls
3. I believe that the world is a dynamic, conscious entity, that mankind is but one part of the cosmic ecology and that, as stewards, we must treat the world responsibly, with love, respect and reverence
4. I believe that consciousness is present in and conveyed through some structures more than others. Thus, for example, crystals are powerful sources or channels of

knowledge and spiritual strength.

- 5 I believe in meditation, trance, rebirthing, self-healing, channeling, past-life regression, crystals, sexual *tantras*, drugs and more as effective tools in the quest for wholeness and oneness with the sacred, and that one should continue to explore alternatives and not feel restricted to the disciplines of any one system of thought
- 6 I believe the world has entered the New Age, the age of Aquarius, awakening to the consciousness of love, selflessness, compassion and creativity, from the old age of hatred, war, ignorance and greed Those who perceive this vision should share it with others to uplift society
- 7 I believe that traditional religions are outmoded and that we are moving toward a universal brotherhood, yet, the Eastern religions and so-called primitive faiths are rich reservoirs of truth and spiritual practice
- 8 I believe in nonconformity and noncommitment that each person is responsible to his-her own conscience only and not to the dictates of society which often unduly hamper freedom of expression, and that even spiritual *gurus* are to be approached with circumspection
- 9 I believe that many of society's traditional economic and social structures are outmoded and should be abandoned for ones which reflect new-age consciousness, and that dropping out of society is a valid new-age alternative

### ECOLOGY MOVEMENT

In the 1980s there arose an earth-ethics movement complete with philosophy, an immense following and compelling missionary zeal It deemed the present global environmental imbalance so severe as to threaten future generations' quality of life, perhaps even leading to the extinction of the human race There is a wide philosophical range among adherents 1) man-centered conservationists seek to preserve

natural resources for human enjoyment, 2) environmentalists work to preserve ecosystems and species and 3) "deep ecologists" call for spiritualization of human life in consonance with a sacred nature. In the 1990s this movement brought together organizational, tribal, religious and political leaders from hundreds of nations to focus on global concerns at immense international conferences. Adherents believe the world community must act speedily to preserve nature and protect humanity from disaster.

### BELIEFS OF THE ECOLOGY MOVEMENT

1. I believe that all nature is sacred and One and that each life form has intrinsic value in a cosmos where elements, plants, animals and humans are intimately interconnected, essential to and dependent on the whole
2. I believe that every human being has the right to a healthy, pristine, undiminished environment, and that we are morally obliged to work toward assuring this right for future generations
3. I believe that all living beings have an inalienable right to exist, and that through our ignorance, assisted by modern science, we have wrongly disrupted the balance of life and brought about the unforgivable extinction of vast numbers of plant and animal species
4. I believe that the sacredness of life demands the practice of nonviolence, that differences must be resolved by consultation rather than conflict. Nations must work toward complete disarmament and termination of all weapons production and trade
5. I believe we must change our system of values away from materialism and consumerism, transform our hearts and minds, make simple and concrete changes in our way of life and renew our deepest religious impulses as we create a global society

6. I believe it is imperative that mankind rediscover the value of frugality, avoid waste, implement sustainable systems of nonpolluting farming, manufacturing and energy production to ensure the ability of future generations to meet their needs. Simplicity of life fosters both inner freedom and outer sustainability.
7. I believe that biological, cultural and religious diversity are essential to the purpose of life, and that all species of life and all human traditions, especially indigenous faiths, must be preserved through peaceful co-existence, protection of habitats through wilderness preservation and sustainable life practices
8. I believe that the present ecological crisis is, at its heart, a spiritual crisis for the human race and affirm the importance of respecting all spiritual traditions, promoting those that foster concern and responsibility for the environment and vigorously challenging those that do not.
9. I believe that overpopulation poses one of the greatest threats to the natural environment and to the quality of human life, and that to establish a sustainable earth community we must promote the extended family and make greater efforts to educate women and children

### FUNDAMENTALISM

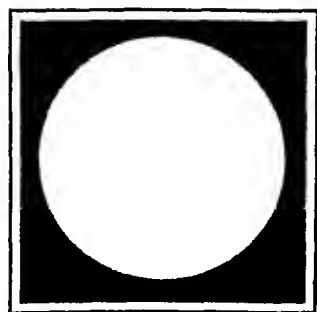
Fundamentalism describes any religious or philosophical group marked by extreme dogmatism and intolerance. There are fundamentalist denominations within virtually every religion and faith—including Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, Sikhism and Hinduism—all believing in a literal interpretation of their scripture as *the* exclusive truth, the one and only way which all souls must follow to attain salvation. Historically, fundamentalism, especially when coupled with evangelical zeal, has led to aggression and violence against nonbelievers.

## FUNDAMENTALISM BELIEFS

- 1 I believe that there is only one acceptable perception of truth, and it is stated in our scriptures; and all who do not accept this doctrine are following false paths and are destined to eternal damnation
- 2 I believe that the gospel was spoken at one point in time by our messiah, the one and only true representative of God, and is not subject to or in need of adaptation through time or circumstance
- 3 I believe that the members of our faith have been divinely commissioned by God and are duty-bound to spread His holy word throughout the world
- 4 I believe that government should reflect and embody the beliefs of my faith, and that even nonbelievers should abide by our religious law as the law of the land
- 5 I believe that there is in this world a battle between the believers, representing the forces of light, and the non-believers, representing the forces of darkness, and that ultimately good will conquer evil
- 6 I believe that, if necessary, force and violence should be used to bring nonbelievers and dissidents to accept the truth of our religious doctrine, and that the use of such force is justifiable in the name of God
- 7 I believe that free inquiry and the questioning of our religious doctrine is the first step to heresy and should be guarded against, and that modern liberties are forms of self-indulgence and sin
- 8 I believe that our codes of morality are God's absolute commandments and are not subject to change, revision or reinterpretation
- 9 I believe that education for children should consist of strict and exclusive learning of our teachings and careful censorship of other forms of thought and belief







# Atheistic Philosophies

## Atheistic Philosophies

In this section we will examine the beliefs of four philosophies or world views that exclude God. materialism, Communism, existentialism, and secular humanism. Of course, there are many smaller ism's that could be listed here, but these are among the most prevalent. Their ideas and teachings have great influence throughout the world, especially through Western universities and the Western news media.

### MATERIALISM

Materialism is "the opinion that nothing exists except matter and its movements and modifications" In practice it is "devotion to material needs or desires to the neglect of spiritual matters, a way of life, opinion or tendency based entirely upon material interests" (*Oxford English Dictionary*) There is a vast range of philosophies based on materialism, often embracing the philosophy of Western science, including determinism, or predetermination, the view that events occur by natural law and the results can be only one way

### MATERIALIST BELIEFS

- 1 I believe that all religious endeavor is a waste of time and energy, that there is no God, and all so-called paranormal or psychic phenomenon is quackery and superstition
- 2 I believe that there is no such thing as the soul, death of the body is death of the mind, and there is no reincarnation or afterlife
- 3 I believe that the material universe, governed by natural laws and chance, is the ultimate and only reality and that all apparently nonmaterial substances, such as mind, are explicable as modifications of matter
- 4 I believe that science is the means of understanding all the secrets of the universe, for all phenomenon is the result of material processes which are governed by pre-

dictable, natural laws

- 5 I believe that free will is an illusion, that each event, being a fortuitous combination of particles and forces, can only happen in one way and is thus predetermined (deterministic materialism)
- 6 I believe that there is no objective “higher purpose” in life, no absolute basis for ethics or morality and no retribution for sin or reward for virtue. Seeking pleasure and avoiding pain are the only two goals rational men will pursue—what pleases me is good, what pains me is bad (hedonistic materialism)
- 7 I believe that all novel qualities of existence can be derived from changing material conditions—that men’s mental and spiritual life, their ideas and aims, reflect their material conditions of existence (dialectical materialism)
- 8 I believe that though not all things consist of matter or its modifications, whatever exists can be satisfactorily explained in natural terms (modified or naturalistic materialism)
- 9 I believe that man, the highest and most complex of the evolutionary process prevailing throughout the universe, may continue to evolve into an even more perfect being or higher species (utopian materialism)

### COMMUNISM

Communism emerged around the turn of the 20th century in present-day Russia as “a hypothetical stage of socialism, as formulated by Marx, Engels, Lenin and others, to be characterized by a classless and stateless society and the equal distribution of economic goods and to be achieved by revolutionary and dictatorial, rather than gradualistic, means” (*Webster’s New World Dictionary*). Communism is proudly atheistic and seeks to liberate mankind from superstition and “spiritual bondage.”

### COMMUNIST BELIEFS

- 1 I believe there is no God, that this physical world is the only reality, physical beings are the only real beings, and reason is man's highest faculty
- 2 I believe religion is "the opiate of the people," a bourgeoisie tool of oppression that should be eliminated and its resources redirected to improving world conditions to lift mankind from its misery
- 3 I believe mysticism and religion are primitive and fraught with error, prejudice and superstition, and that modern science, based on materialism and empirical evidence, is the only respectable avenue to useful knowledge
- 4 I believe that each person has but a single life in which to attain all he deems worthwhile and express his finer qualities in service to the greater social good
- 5 I believe that as in the case of nature, history evolves in a continuous line from lower to higher forms, from tribalism, feudalism and capitalism to its final maturity in socialism, and that the collapse of capitalism and the establishment of socialism will usher in a utopian age of peace and plenty, when state control will no longer be needed
- 6 I believe that all men are created equal and are inherently good, and that distinctive attitudes, personalities and experiences are determined solely by one's environment, therefore, to uplift mankind, improve the environment
- 7 I believe that the views expressed by our great Marxist revolutionaries represent the one and only correct world outlook, and that it is imperative to overthrow the capitalist regimes, through violent revolution if necessary, to usher in a new order
- 8 I believe that the world's wealth should be shared equally, and that unequal distribution caused by class distinctions, is the root of all social evils, driving men to greed,

selfishness and exploitation Economic necessity is the basic moving force in society.

- 9 I believe there is no knowable providential order, that death is permanent, that God does not exist and that the highest life is one of intense consciousness

### EXISTENTIALISM

Existentialism arose in Europe in the mid-19th century It teaches that God does not exist, or cannot be known, and affirms individuality and freedom Stress is on transcendence of the mundane world through exaltation of will, the meaninglessness of existence and the absence of a substratum upon which to base truths or values Man simply exists, free to create his own meaning in life

### EXISTENTIALIST BELIEFS

- 1 I believe that there is no knowable providential order in nature or in the larger realm of existence or cosmos
- 2 I believe that the being of man is ultimately meaningless, which is to say that man knows not why he exists and cannot rise to the knowledge of his destiny
- 3 I believe that each man is an individual and should break his dependence on society and rely solely upon his own individual life, spirit, personality and thought
- 4 I believe that immortality is not a characteristic of man Death is only realistically seen as an ultimate end and radical fact which cannot be overcome Man should not tolerate even an anguished hope of personal survival
- 5 I believe that harmony and security in human relationships are impossible to achieve, and the only satisfactory attitude toward others is based upon explicit recognition of this fact.
- 6 I believe that "Evil is not an illusion It is not the effect of passions which might be cured, or a fear which might be

overcome It is not an ignorance which might be enlightened Evil cannot be redeemed" (Sartre)

- 7 I believe that God does not exist
- 8 I believe that the highest and best life is lived in the intensity of being fully conscious of the life experience This experience necessarily contains problems, struggle, suffering and conflict This is man's unalterable reality within which his free creative action and choice gives birth to the fullness of consciousness which would otherwise be deadened by security and contentment
- 9 I believe that the soul of man is not whole without such unpleasant things as death, anxiety, guilt, fear and trembling, and despair It would be the final error of reason to deny that these emotions exist, or to strive to manipulate them out of existence Therefore, it can be said that nothing can be accomplished by denying that man is essentially a troubled being, except to make more trouble

### SECULAR HUMANISM

Humanism is "a modern, nontheistic, rationalist movement that holds that man is capable of self-fulfillment, ethical conduct, etc , without recourse to supernaturalism" (*Webster's New World Dictionary*) By the term *secular* this stream distinguishes itself from theistic (Christian) humanism Secular humanism evolved out of 18th-century rejection of revealed Christianity and the emergence of modern science and free thought Modern secular humanists condemn and refute all assertions of divine or paranormal phenomenon

### SECULAR HUMANIST BELIEFS

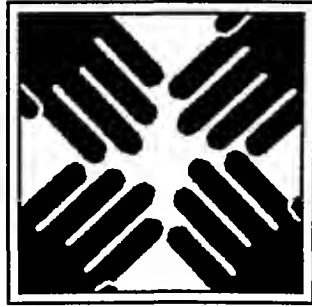
- 1 I believe in nontheism, as there is no rational proof for the existence of God, and do not delude myself with thoughts of a supreme being
- 2 I believe that traditional religions and faiths preach false

doctrines, are oppressive and lead their followers toward ignorance, bigotry and dogmatism, and that it is my duty to be actively skeptical of and challenge the illusions of orthodox religions and all attempts to explain the world in supernatural terms

- 3 I believe in the preservation and enhancement of the human species as my ultimate concern, and in the global human family, which must preserve the earth for future generations through developing a secular, planetary morality and system of law
- 4 I believe that living a good, moral life is the best means for individual and collective happiness and that morality has a rational, secular basis
- 5 I believe in expanding human rights and intellectual and moral freedom, and in secular democracy, with strict separation of church and state, as the means of eliminating discrimination and attaining equality and justice for all
- 6 I believe in the development of the creative human potential through education in the arts and sciences and in the paramount importance of free inquiry in an open, pluralistic, universalist society
- 7 I believe in the application and development of reason and modern science as the highest means to understanding the universe, solving human problems and enabling each individual to realize his greatest potential
- 8 I believe in striving for fulfillment and happiness in this life and reject all notions of reincarnation and afterlife as false and baseless, seeking my fullest capacity as a human being here and now, serving others and creating a better, more just world
- 9 I believe in Darwin's theory of evolution as scientific fact, and in naturalism, holding that the known world is all that exists, and that it has no supernatural or spiritual creation, control or significance







# Religious Comparisons

## Comparing Eastern Views and Western Views

In the following analysis, using one of several common religious categorizations, we compare the Eastern religions with the Western ones on many points of belief. The Eastern religions are Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism and Sikhism. The Western religions are Judaism, Zoroastrianism, Christianity and Islam. We can see immediately that there is a vast difference between Eastern and Western religions, with the Eastern goals being unitive and introspective and the Western goals being dualistic, extroverted. The Eastern mind tends to see God everywhere, in all things, and to see everything as sacred. The Western mind considers it heresy to believe that God pervades all things, and makes a strong difference between what is sacred and what is profane. In general we notice the Eastern holding to *karma*, reincarnation and liberation, the Western postulating a single life for the soul, followed by reward or punishment.

Keep in mind that this is not a comprehensive comparison, as it does not take into account the East Asia religions—Taoism, Confucianism and Shinto.

To discover your own belief patterns, take a pencil and put a check mark next to the view—Eastern or Western—which is closest to your own belief on each of the subjects.

We might note here that the Eastern religions described here all originated in India, and that Jainism, Buddhism and Sikhism were offshoots of Hinduism. Among the Western faiths, Judaism, Christianity and Islam all share a common root in Abraham, and in recent times the term *Abrahamic* has been coined to denote these three world religions. Naturally there are important exceptions to the views expressed (for example, Buddhism does not believe in a Personal God). Nevertheless these broad generalities are useful, as they give a scholarly window into the East and the West.

## DIFFERENCES

### *On Creation*

**EASTERN VIEW** The universe exists in endless cycles of creation, preservation and destruction. There is no absolute end to the world, neither is there a duality of God and world, but a unity.

**WESTERN VIEW** The world was created by God and at some point in the future will be forever destroyed by Him. He is distinct from it, and rules it from above. Stresses a dualistic nature of the world.

### *On the True God*

**EASTERN VIEW** There is but one true and absolute God. All religions speak of Him. All souls are destined to receive God's grace through a process that takes them through diverse experiences on many paths according to their understanding, temperament and maturity of soul. God is pure Love and Consciousness.

**WESTERN VIEW** There is but one true God and one true religion. Those who accept it will enjoy God's grace, all others, unless they repent and come to my God, will suffer eternally in hell. God is loving as well as wrathful.

### *On Proof of God's Existence*

**EASTERN VIEW** Proof of God's existence and love lies in direct communion, and indirectly through enlightened *gurus*, the God-Realized men of all ages, and the revealed scriptures they bring forth in every age.

**WESTERN VIEW** Proof of God's love and promise for man is in the person of His Prophet and in His unchanging and unique revealed scripture.

### *On Personal Experience of God*

**EASTERN VIEW** Personal, inner and often mystical experience of God is the crux of religion. Man can and ultimately must know God during earthly life. Individually oriented and introspective.

**WESTERN VIEW** It is presumptuous for man to seek personal knowledge of God. The linchpin of religion is not experience but belief and faith, coupled with a virtuous life. Socially oriented and extroverted.

### *On the Path to God, and Divine Judgment*

**EASTERN VIEW** Man is free to choose his form of worship, for all paths lead ultimately to God. Sin is only of the mind, not of the soul, which is pure. There is no Judgment Day for God does not judge or punish. He lovingly guides all souls back to Himself.

**WESTERN VIEW** Only one path leads to God, others are false and futile. Everyone must convert to the one true religion. Failing that, the soul, laden with sin, will be damned on Judgment Day.

### *On Man's Plight*

**EASTERN VIEW** Man's plight is but his soul's immaturity. He is ever on a progressive path which leads from ignorance to knowledge, from death to immortality.

**WESTERN VIEW** Man's plight is due to disobedience to God's will, to nonbelief and nonacceptance of His law.

### *On Hell*

**EASTERN VIEW** God is Love and is inextricably one with the soul, guiding it through *karmas* into the fulfillment of *dharma* and finally to *moksha*, liberation. Hell is a lower astral realm, not a physical place, nor is it eternal. Hell exists as a period of *karmic* intensity or suffering, a state of mind in life or between lives.

**WESTERN VIEW** On Judgment Day the physical body of every

soul that ever lived is brought to life, and God consigns pure souls to heaven and sinners to hell, a physical place where the body burns without being consumed and one suffers the anguish of knowing he will never be with God

### *On Evil*

**EASTERN VIEW.** There is no intrinsic evil. All is good. All is God. No force in the world or in man opposes God, though the veiling instinctive-intellectual mind keeps us from knowledge of Him.

**WESTERN VIEW.** There is indeed genuine evil in the world, a living force which opposes the will of God. This evil is embodied in Satan and his demons, and partially in man as one of his tendencies.

### *On Virtue and Salvation*

**EASTERN VIEW.** Virtuous conduct and right belief are the foundation stones of religious life, the first step toward higher mystical communion. Liberation requires knowledge and personal attainment, not mere belief.

**WESTERN VIEW.** If one obeys God's commands for a moral and ethical life and believes in Him and in His Prophet—for example, Moses, Jesus, Mohammed or Zoroaster—salvation is assured.

### *On the Origin of Religion*

**EASTERN VIEW.** Religion is cosmic, eternal, transcending human history, which is cyclical. Stress is placed on revelation of God's presence in the here and now.

**WESTERN VIEW.** Religion is historical, beginning with a prophet or event. Stress is placed on the past and on the rewards or punishments of the future. History is linear, never to be repeated.

### *Nature of Doctrines*

**EASTERN VIEW.** Doctrines tend to be subtle, complex and

even paradoxical Freedom to worship and to believe in a variety of ways is predominant Other paths are accepted as God's divine will at work Universal and tolerant

WESTERN VIEW Doctrines tend to be simple, clear and rational Worship and belief are formalized, exacting and required Other paths are endured, but not honored Exclusivist and dogmatic

### ***On Liberation and Enlightenment***

EASTERN VIEW The goals of enlightenment and liberation are to be found in this life, within the context of time, within man himself Schools may be dual or nondual, *dvaitic* or *advaitic*

WESTERN VIEW Salvation comes at the end of the world, the end of time, and has nothing to do with enlightenment Strictly dualistic, *dvaitic* Mystical sects, though minor, provide exceptions

### ***On the Path to Sainthood***

EASTERN VIEW Path to saintliness is through self-discipline, purification, concentration and contemplation Value is placed on ascetic ideals, individual *sādhana*, *yoga* and superconscious awakening

WESTERN VIEW Path to saintliness is through self-sacrifice, submission to God and concern for the welfare of others Value is placed on good works, social concerns and scriptural study, with little emphasis on *yoga* or asceticism

### ***On the Nature of Worship***

EASTERN VIEW Worship is individual, highly ritualistic and meditative, centering around the holy temple and the home shrine all days of the week

WESTERN VIEW Worship is congregational, simple in its rituals, centering around the church, synagogue or mosque, mostly on a Sabbath day

## SIMILARITIES

### *On God and Devas*

**EASTERN VIEW** Belief in a Supreme Deity, maker of all souls and all things, and in lesser Deities and Mahādevas

**WESTERN VIEW** Belief in a Supreme Deity, maker of all souls and all things, and in the angels and celestial hosts

### *On Salvation and God's Will*

**EASTERN VIEW** Salvation is through strict obedience to God's will and the descent of His grace through the enlightened spiritual preceptor

**WESTERN VIEW** Salvation is through strict obedience to God's will, usually through a messiah, prophet or priest

### *On Good Conduct*

**EASTERN VIEW** To live a virtuous and moral life is essential to further spiritual progress, for *adharmic* thoughts, deeds and words keep us from knowledge of God's closeness

**WESTERN VIEW** Religion must be based on ethical and moral conduct, for their opposite leads us away from God

### *On the Destiny of the Soul*

**EASTERN VIEW** The purpose of life is to evolve, through experience, into our spiritual destiny Things of the world are not the purpose of the world

**WESTERN VIEW** Man's destiny lies beyond this world, which is but an opportunity for earning eternal joy or suffering

### *On the Nature of Reality*

**EASTERN VIEW** There is more to reality than we experience with the five senses The soul is immortal, deathless and eternal, ultimately merging in God

**WESTERN VIEW** There is more to reality than the things of this world The soul is immortal, deathless and eternal, living forever in God's presence or separated from Him



## Comparing Judaism, Christianity and Islam

The similarities between these three Abrahamic religions are stronger than their differences, though historically it is the differences that have been exalted. They each believe in a single life, followed by heaven or hell. They agree that God is opposed by evil, by Satan, who tempts and destroys sinners by causing disobedience to God's law. They are all prophet-oriented, though Christianity is the only one to make the prophet divine. They believe in their religion as the one and only true religion, and that nonbelievers are condemned, though Judaism is somewhat more tolerant or universal, believing God judges all men of all religions by their actions. These three Biblical religions are strongly monotheistic and dualistic, believing man is eternally separate from God and that man's highest destiny is in heaven. Together they rely not so much on inner experience or mystical contact and guidance, as on sacred rites, on faith and belief, and on good works to guide man Godward. Each believes that God has a special covenant with its members, though the terms differ. They each bury their dead, anticipating that the physical body will one day be resurrected on the earth, rising from the grave on Judgment Day.

### *On the True Religion*

**JUDAISM** There is but one true religion, Judaism, and one revealed scripture, the *Torah*, which includes the *Pentateuch* (the first five books of the *Old Testament*) and the *Talmud*.

**CHRISTIANITY** There is but one true religion, Christianity, and one scripture—the *Holy Bible*, Old and New Testaments.

**ISLAM** The one true faith is Islam, and the *Koran* is the highest revealed scripture, but other books are honored as revealed too, including the *Bible* and certain Hindu scriptures.

### *On Genesis and Original Sin*

JUDAISM Belief in Adam, his temptation and fall from grace and in original sin

CHRISTIANITY The same

ISLAM Same, but Allah forgave Adam Therefore, there is no original sin

### *On the Proof of God's Power*

JUDAISM Such proof can be seen in the historic Exodus

CHRISTIANITY Proof of God's power lies in Christ's resurrection

ISLAM Proof of God's power is in the *Koran* itself

### *On Man's Obligation to God*

JUDAISM Jews are obligated exclusively to Yahweh, since He delivered them out of Egypt

CHRISTIANITY Man is obligated to God since He sacrificed His Son for man's sins

ISLAM There exists no special obligation, avoidance of hell is man's motivation

### *On the Means to Salvation*

JUDAISM Salvation is through strict adherence to the Law as stated in the *Torah*

CHRISTIANITY Salvation is through acceptance of Christ as Lord and Savior

ISLAM Salvation is through total submission to Allah

## Comparing the Four Hindu Sects

The spectrum of Hindu religiousness is found within four major sects or denominations Śaivism, Śāktism, Vaiṣṇavism and Smārtism. Among these four streams, there are certainly more similarities than differences. Many of the *ślokas* and *bhāṣyas* of *Dancing with Śiva* (*Śivena saha Nartanam*): *Hinduism's Contemporary Catechism* (*Sanātana Dharma Praśnottaram*) have shown how they concur as well as differ.

All four believe in *karma* and reincarnation and in a Supreme Being who is both form and pervades form, who creates, sustains and destroys the universe only to create it again in unending cycles. They strongly declare the validity and importance of temple worship, in the three worlds of existence and the myriad Gods and *devas* residing in them. They concur that there is no intrinsic evil, that the cosmos is created out of God and is permeated by Him. They each believe in *māyā* (though their definitions differ somewhat), and in the liberation of the soul from rebirth, called *moksha*, as the goal of human existence. They believe in *dharma* and in *ahimsā*, noninjury, and in the need for a *satguru* to lead the soul toward Self Realization. They wear the sacred marks, *tilaka*, on their foreheads as sacred symbols, though each wears a distinct mark. Finally, they prefer cremation of the body upon death, believing that the soul will inhabit another body in the next life. While Hinduism has many sacred scriptures, all sects ascribe the highest authority to the *Vedas* and *Āgamas*, though their *Āgamas* differ somewhat. Here, now, is a brief comparison of these four denominations.

### *On the Personal God/Goddess*

ŚAIVISM: Personal God and temple Deity is Śiva, neither male nor female. Lords Ganeśa and Kārttikeya are also worshiped.

ŚĀKTISM: Personal Goddess and temple Deity is Śrī Devī or Śakti, female, worshiped as Rājārājeśvarī, Pārvatī, Lakshmi, Sarasvatī, Kālī, Amman, etc. —the Divine Mother

**VAISHNAVISM** Personal God and temple Deity is Vishnu, male His incarnations as Rāma and Krishna are also worshiped, as well as His divine consort, Rādhā Rānī

**SMĀRTISM** Personal God and temple Deity is Īśvara, male or female, worshiped as Vishnu, Śiva, Śakti, Ganeśa and Sūrya or any Deity of devotee's choice, e g , Kumāra or Krishna

### *On the Nature of Śakti*

**ŚAIVISM** Śakti is God Śiva's inseparable power and manifest will, energy or mind

**ŚĀKTISM** Śakti is an active, immanent Being, separate from a quiescent and remote Śiva

**VAISHNAVISM** No special importance is given to Śakti However, there are parallels wherein the divine consorts are conceived as the inseparable powers of Vishnu and His incarnations e g , Krishna's Rādhā Rānī and Rāma's Sitā

**SMĀRTISM** Śakti is a divine form of Īśvara It is God's manifesting power

### *On the Nature of Personal God*

**ŚAIVISM** God Śiva is pure love and compassion, immanent and transcendent, pleased by our purity and *sādhana*

**ŚĀKTISM** The Goddess Śakti is both compassionate and terrifying, pleasing and wrathful, assuaged by sacrifice and submission

**VAISHNAVISM** God Vishnu is loving and beautiful, the object of man's devotion, pleased by our service and surrender

**SMĀRTISM** Īśvara appears as a human-like Deity according to devotees' loving worship, which is sometimes considered a rudimentary self-purifying practice

### *On the Doctrine of Avatāra*

**ŚAIVISM** There are no divine earthly incarnations

**ŚĀKTISM** The Divine Mother does incarnate in this world

**VAISHNAVISM** Vishnu has ten or more incarnations

**SMĀRTISM** All Deities may assume earthly incarnations

### *On the Soul and God*

ŚAIVISM God Śiva is one with the soul. The soul must realize this *advaitic* Truth by God Śiva's grace.

ŚĀKTISM The Divine Mother, Śakti, is mediatrix, bestowing *advaitic moksha* on those who worship Her.

VAISHNAVISM God and soul are eternally distinct. Through Lord Vishnu's grace, the soul's destiny is to worship and enjoy God.

SMĀRTISM Īśvara and man are in reality Absolute Brahman. Within *māyā*, the soul and Īśvara appear as two. *Jñāna* dispels the illusion.

### *Spiritual Practice*

ŚAIVISM With *bhakti* as a base, emphasis is placed on *sādhana*, *tapas* and *yoga*. Ascetic.

ŚĀKTISM Emphasis is on *bhakti* and *tantra*, sometimes occult, practices. Ascetic-occult.

VAISHNAVISM Emphasis is on supreme *bhakti* or surrender, called *prapatti*. Generally devotional and nonascetic.

SMĀRTISM Preparatory *sādhana*s are *bhakti*, *karma*, *rāja yoga*. Highest path is through knowledge, leading to *jñāna*.

### *Major Scriptures*

ŚAIVISM *Vedas*, *Śaiva Āgamas* and *Śaiva Purāṇas*.

ŚĀKTISM *Vedas*, *Śākta Āgamas* (*Tantras*) and *Purāṇas*.

VAISHNAVISM *Vedas*, *Vaiṣṇava Āgamas*, *Purāṇas* and the *Itihāsas* (*Rāmāyana* and *Mahābhārata*, especially the *Bhagavad Gītā*).

SMĀRTISM *Vedas*, *Āgamas* and classical *smṛiti*—*Purāṇas*, *Itihāsas*, especially the *Bhagavad Gītā*, etc.

### *Regions of Influence*

ŚAIVISM Geographically widespread, strongest in South and North India, Nepal and Sri Lanka.

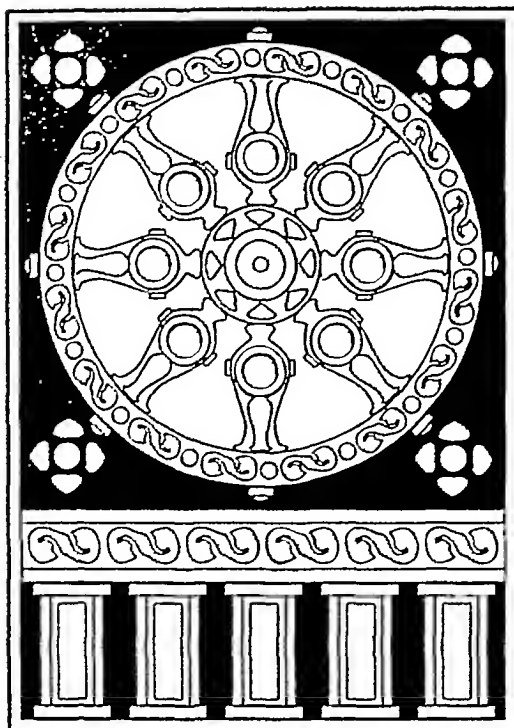
ŚĀKTISM Geographically widespread, most prominent in North India, especially Bengal and Assam.

**VAISHNAVISM** Geographically widespread, especially strong throughout India, North and South

**SMĀRTISM** Geographically widespread, most prominent in North and South India

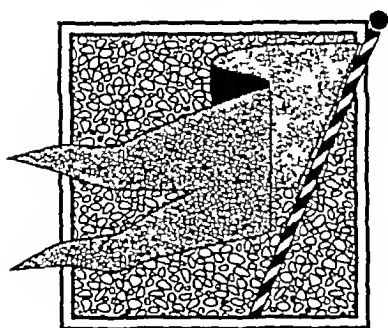
## CONCLUSION

This concludes our simple comparison of Hinduism's four prominent denominations, and of other religions, faiths and philosophies. There are many more indigenous, tribal groups who follow similar paths and call themselves by unique names, and there are many more paths yet to be discovered in the future. This chapter can be a complete study, conferring on those who read it carefully a simple overview of those intangible human beliefs which, in all their variety, are at the root of attitudes and behavior, that, over time, create culture. This chapter can also be more. It can be the beginning of discovering your own place in this grand scheme. Conversion is easy into any one of these forms of worship, practice and attainment. It is happening all the time. All souls on the path to perfection eventually commit themselves by choosing a preceptor, one who has gone before. Approaching life without a preceptor is like traversing the ocean without a map or a compass. Even climbing the slopes of the Himalayas, a Sherpa is needed to safely guide. Compare your beliefs, as they are today, with all those contained within this treatise, and come to terms with the supreme dedication that each of these paths demands of its followers. Having done this, declare boldly who you are to your own self. Claim your spiritual identity, your preceptor and the religious to faith to which you find you belong. Then follow your chosen path with all your heart. Give it your full devotion, energy and loyalty in fulfilling its goals. True seekers on the path hoping for genuine attainment do not wander from path to path, school to school, preceptor to preceptor, because it is known that indecision inhibits all spiritual growth.



Bālaka Pustaka

बालकपुस्तक



# A Children's Primer

*Dhvaja*, “flag,” is the orange or red banner flown above temples, at festivals and in processions. It is a symbol of victory, signal to all that “Sanātana Dharma shall prevail.” Its color betokens the sun’s life-giving glow. Aum





## A Children's Primer

Loving Hindu parents worldwide have called for a common religious code to teach their sons and daughters. They have asked, "What is the minimum I must do to dispatch my duty to my religion and my children?" The World Hindu Federation of Nepal discussed this need at its international conference in Bali in late 1992, and shared their concern with me at that time. In response, I told the Bali Mahāsangha that I would work with my research staff to prepare the minimal duties for parents to pass on the Sanātana Dharma to the next generation. The result was ten *ślokas* summarizing the five essential Hindu beliefs, and the five corresponding observances performed in expression of those beliefs. *Āchāryas* concur that these are enough to know and follow to be a good Hindu. We first published these in *Hinduism Today's* March, 1993, edition, along with the very popular primer for children covering Hinduism from A to Z. Both of these are assembled here as *A Children's Primer*.

In this section you will also find an illustrated summary of the essential Hindu *samskāras*, or rites of passage. These sacraments are vital to Hindus, for whom life is a sacred journey and every crucial step is acknowledged through traditional ceremony. There are many types of *samskāras*, from the rite prior to conception to the funeral ceremony. Each one, properly observed, empowers spiritual life, preserves religious culture and establishes bonds with inner worlds as the soul accepts and matures into the responsibilities of each succeeding stage of life.

The modern Hindu child raised up with these precepts, practices and sacraments will be a fully functioning human being, one who is tolerant, devotional, fair, fearless, obedient, secure, happy, selfless, detached and traditional.



# Hinduism A to Z

## *Dharma Varṇamālā*

## धर्मवर्णमाला

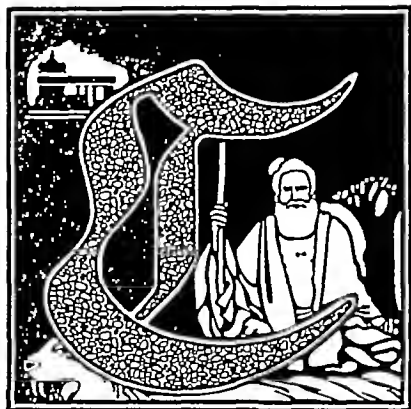
A CHILDREN'S PRIMER ON HINDU THOUGHT  
AND IDEALS, COVERING DHARMA FROM A TO Z  
AND FEATURING A UNIQUE INITIAL ALPHABET  
DESIGNED WITH INDIAN MOTIFS



*A* is for Aum,  
the three-syllabled  
mantra that repre-  
sents the Sacred  
Mystery in sound  
and vibration.

*B* is for bhakti,  
deep devotion  
and love for the  
Divine which  
softens even  
hearts of stone.



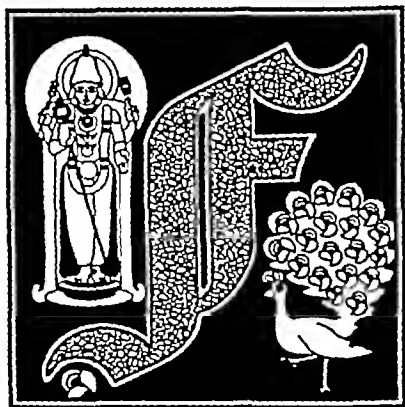


*C* is for culture,  
the beauty of  
Hindu music, fine  
arts, drama, dance,  
literature and  
architecture.

*D* is for  
dharma, which  
is righteousness,  
cosmic order and  
duty, leading us on  
the right path.



*E* is for Earth, our  
lovely blue planet,  
which we treat as  
sacred, protecting  
all its wonderful  
creatures.



*F* is for family,  
the precious  
cornerstone of  
Hindu life, culture,  
service and  
tradition.

*G* is for guru,  
our enlightened  
master who,  
knowing Truth  
himself, can  
guide us there.

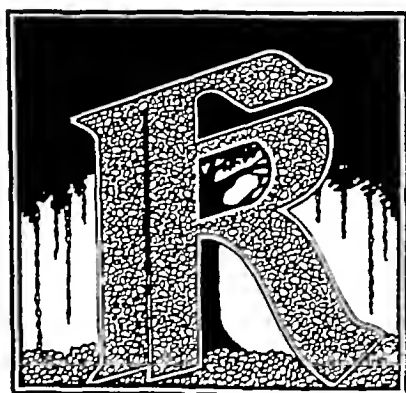
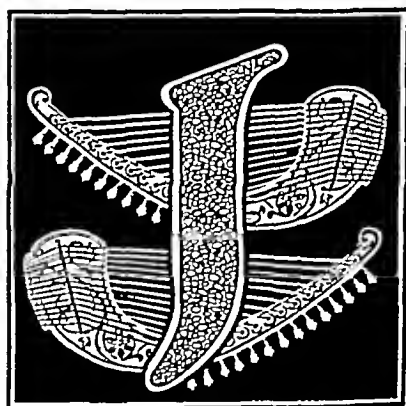


*H* is for haṭha  
yoga, healthful  
physical science  
for vitality, energy-  
balancing and  
meditation.

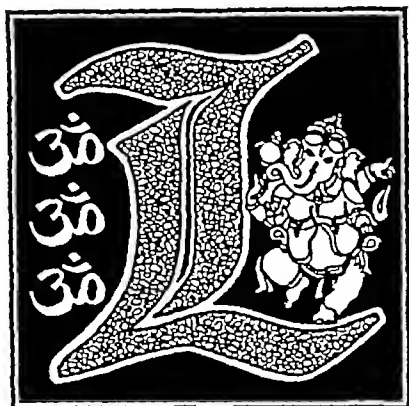


*I* is for India,  
*Bhārata*, Mother-  
 land to one-sixth  
 of humanity, Holy  
 Land for Hindus  
 everywhere.

*J* is for *japa*,  
 repetitive, prayerful  
 mantras which  
 quiet emotion  
 and empower the  
 mind.



*K* is for karma,  
 the law of cause  
 and effect by which  
 we determine our  
 experience and  
 destiny.



*L is for lotus,  
the heart's inner  
shrine, where  
God dwells, ever  
serene, ever  
perfect.*

*M is for mauna,  
not talking, the  
inner silence known  
when words,  
thoughts and  
actions are stilled.*



*N is for non-  
attachment, the art  
of living the simple  
life, without too  
many needs or  
desires.*





*O is for  
open-mindedness,  
the Hindu's  
tolerant freedom  
of thought, inquiry  
and belief.*

*P is for pūjā,  
mystic worship  
of the Divine in  
our home shrine  
and holy temples  
and places.*

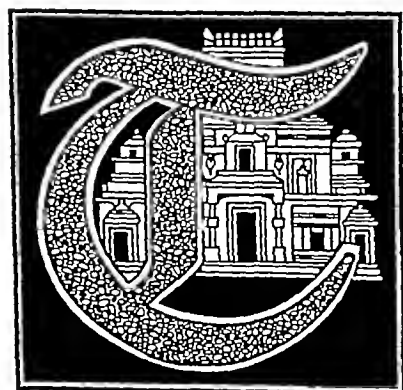


*Q is for quest,  
seeking to know,  
"Who am I? Where  
did I come from?  
Where am I  
going?"*

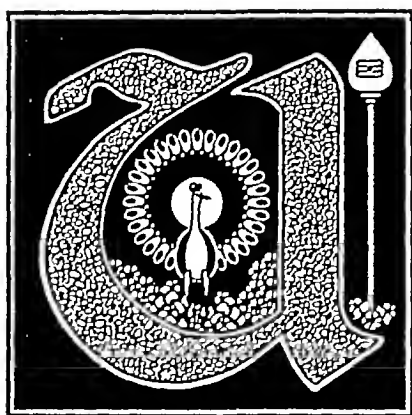


*R* is for  
reincarnation, our  
immortal soul's  
journey from birth  
to rebirth. We do  
not fear death.

*S* is for saṁskāras,  
sacraments  
sanctifying life's  
passages: name-  
giving, marriage,  
death and more.

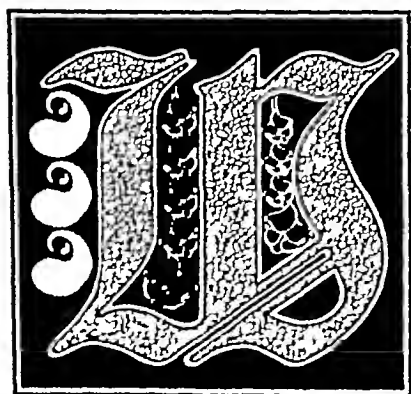
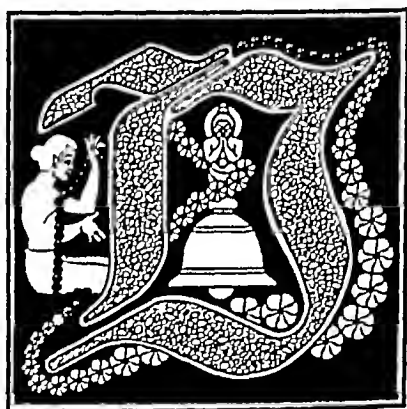


*T* is for tilaka,  
forehead marks  
worn in honor  
of our unique  
and varied  
lineages.

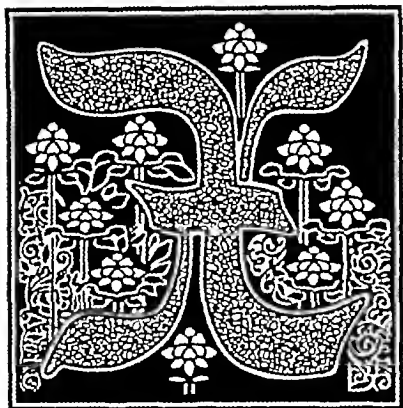


*U* is for utsava,  
our many home  
and temple festi-  
vals, full of bhakti,  
fun, feasting, and  
family sharing.

*V* is for Vedas,  
our oldest and  
holiest book, the  
word of God re-  
corded in 100,000  
Sanskrit verses.



*W* is for wealth  
(artha), one of  
life's four goals,  
along with love,  
dharma and  
enlightenment.



*X is for  
xerophily, the  
ability of certain  
plants and animals  
to thrive in India's  
hot, arid plains.*

*Y is for yoga,  
union of the soul  
with God which  
brings release  
from worldly  
bondage.*



*Z is for zeal, the  
fervor with which  
we perform service,  
go on pilgrimage  
and greet our holy  
religious leaders.*



# Five Precepts

## *Pañcha Śraddhā*

### पञ्चश्रद्धा

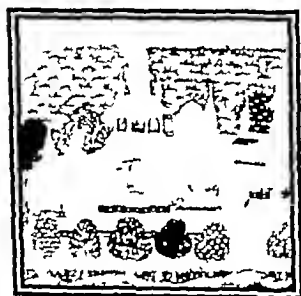
THESE FIVE ŚLOKAS CONSTITUTE THE MINIMAL HINDU BELIEFS BY TEACHING THESE TO SONS AND DAUGHTERS, PARENTS WORLDWIDE PASS ON THE SANĀTANA DHARMA TO THEIR CHILDREN

#### सर्व ब्रह्म 1. *Sarva Brahma*: God is All in all



The dear children are taught of one Supreme Being, all-pervasive, transcendent, creator, preserver, destroyer, manifesting in various forms, worshiped in all religions by many names, the immortal Self in all. They learn to be tolerant, knowing the soul's divinity and the unity of all mankind.

#### मन्दिर 2. *Mandira*: Holy Temples



The dear children are taught that God, other divine beings and highly evolved souls exist in unseen worlds. They learn to be devoted, knowing that temple worship, fire-ceremonies, sacraments and devotionals open channels for loving blessings, help and guidance from these beings.

### कर्म 3. *Karma*: Cosmic Justice



The dear children are taught of *karma*, the divine law of cause and effect by which every thought, word and deed justly returns to them in this or a future life. They learn to be compassionate, knowing that each experience, good or bad, is the self-created reward of prior expressions of free will.

### ससार मोक्ष 4. *Samsāra-Moksha*: Liberation



The dear children are taught that souls experience righteousness, wealth and pleasure in many births, while maturing spiritually. They learn to be fearless, knowing that all souls, without exception, will ultimately attain Self Realization, liberation from rebirth and union with God.

### वेद गुरु 5. *Veda, Guru*: Scripture, Preceptor



The dear children are taught that God revealed the *Vedas* and *Āgamas*, which contain the eternal truths. They learn to be obedient, following the precepts of these sacred scriptures and awakened *satgurus*, whose guidance is absolutely essential for spiritual progress and enlightenment.

# Five Practices

## *Pañcha Kriyā*

## पञ्चक्रिया

THESE FIVE ŚLOKAS OUTLINE THE MINIMAL HINDU PRACTICES THAT PARENTS TEACH THEIR CHILDREN IN ORDER TO NURTURE FUTURE CITIZENS WHO ARE STRONG, SECURE, RESPONSIBLE, TOLERANT AND TRADITIONAL

### उपासना 1. *Upāsana*: Worship



The dear children are taught daily worship in the family shrine room—rituals, disciplines, chants, *yogas* and religious study. They learn to be secure through devotion in home and temple, wearing traditional dress, bringing forth love of the Divine and preparing the mind for serene meditation.

### उत्सव 2. *Utsava*: Holy Days



The dear children are taught to participate in Hindu festivals and holy days in the home and temple. They learn to be happy through sweet communion with God at such auspicious celebrations. *Utsava* includes fasting and attending the temple on Monday or Friday and other holy days.



### धर्म 3. *Dharma*: Virtuous Living



The dear children are taught to live a life of duty and good conduct. They learn to be selfless by thinking of others first, being respectful of parents, elders and *swāmīs*, following divine law, especially *ahimsā*, mental, emotional and physical noninjury to all beings. Thus they resolve *karmas*

### तीर्थयात्रा 4. *Tirthayātrā*: Pilgrimage



The dear children are taught the value of pilgrimage and are taken at least once a year for *darśana* of holy persons, temples and places, near or far. They learn to be detached by setting aside worldly affairs and making God, Gods and *gurus* life's singular focus during these journeys.

### संस्कार 5. *Saṃskāra*: Rites of Passage



The dear children are taught to observe the many sacraments which mark and sanctify their passages through life. They learn to be traditional by celebrating the rites of birth, name-giving, head-shaving, first feeding, ear-piercing, first learning, coming of age, marriage and death.

# Five Parenting Guidelines

## *Pañcha Kuṭumba Sādhana*

### पञ्चकुटुम्ब साधन

**1. Good Conduct—*Dharmāchāra*:** Loving fathers and mothers, knowing they are the greatest influence in a child's life, behave the way their dear children should when adults. They never anger or argue before young ones. Father in a *dhoti*, mother in a *sārī* at home, all sing to God, Gods and *guru*.

**2. Home Worship—*Dharma Svagriha*:** Loving fathers and mothers establish a separate shrine room in the home for God, Gods and guardian *devas* of the family. Ideally it should be large enough for all the dear children. It is a sacred place for scriptural study, a refuge from the *karmic* storms of life.

**3. Talking About Religion—*Dharma Sambhāshana*:** Loving fathers and mothers speak Vedic precepts while driving, eating and playing. This helps dear children understand experiences in right perspective. Parents know many worldly voices are blaring, and their *dharmic* voice must be stronger.

**4. Continuing Self-Study—*Dharma Svādhyāya*:** Loving fathers and mothers keep informed by studying the *Vedas*, *Āgamas* and sacred literature, listening to *swāmīs* and *panditas*. Youth face a world they will one day own, thus parents prepare their dear children to guide their own future progeny.

**5. Following a Spiritual Preceptor—*Dharma Sanga*:** Loving fathers and mothers choose a preceptor, a traditional *sat-guru*, and lineage to follow. They support their lineage with all their heart, energy and service. He in turn provides them clear guidance for a successful life, material and religious.



# Eight Rites of Passage

## *Ashṭa Saṁskāra*

## अष्टसंस्कार

SACRAMENTS ARE PERFORMED TO CELEBRATE AND SANCTIFY LIFE'S CRUCIAL JUNCTURES, INFORM FAMILY AND COMMUNITY, AND SECURE INNER-WORLD BLESSINGS HERE ARE EIGHT OF THE ESSENTIAL RITES



### *Nāmakarana Samskāra*

This is the Hindu name-giving ceremony, performed in the home or the temple 11 to 41 days after birth. The father whispers the auspicious new name in the infant's right ear.

### *Annaprāśana Samskāra*

The first feeding of solid food is a sacred event performed by the father in the temple or home. The choice of food offered to a child at this crucial time is said to help forge his or her destiny.





### *Karnavedha Samskāra*

The ear-piercing ceremony, given to both boys and girls, performed in the temple or the home, generally on the child's first birthday. Health and wealth benefits derive from this ancient rite.

### *Chūdākarana Samskāra*

The head is shaven and smeared with sandalwood paste in this rite performed in the temple or home before age four. It is a very happy day for the child. The shaven head denotes purity and egolessness.



### *Vidyārambha Samskāra*

The official beginning of primary education. In this rite, performed in the home or temple, the child scribes his or her first letter of the alphabet in a tray of unbroken, uncooked, saffron rice.

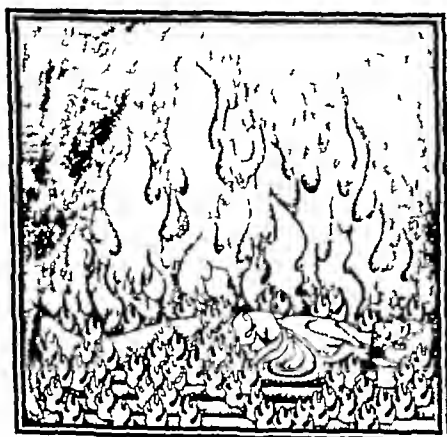


### *Upanayana Samskara*

The ceremonial investment of the "sacred thread" and initiation into Vedic study, performed in the home or temple, usually between the ages of 9 and 15, after which a youth is considered "twice born"

### *Vivaha Samskara*

The marriage ceremony, performed in a temple or wedding hall around the sacred *homa* fire. Lifetime vows, Vedic prayers and seven steps before God and Gods consecrate the union of husband and wife



### *Antyeshthi Samskara*

The funeral rite includes preparation of the body, cremation, home-cleansing and dispersal of ashes. The purifying fire releases the soul from this world that it may journey unhindered to the next



# Conclusion

## *Nirvahaṇa*

## निर्वहण

**T**HERE IS NO COMING THERE IS NO GOING YOU AND I ARE EVER ONE REMAIN SILENT AND KNOW THE SELF WITHIN YOU WON'T FIND IT in books You will find it deep within yourself, my *satguru* said So, *Dancing with Śiva* is a signpost to point the way It is a map to give direction And it is five months of daily *sādhana*, reading one *śloka* a day, at night just before sleep, to remold the subconscious memory patterns of the base subjective mind into a brand new you The wisdom of the *Vedas* will be yours when the old *samskāras* no longer fight with the new The old impressions of how you were raised, whom and what you were taught to like and dislike will be erased by the eternal wisdom of the *Vedas* and *Āgamas*, amplified by the explanations above the verses in each of these daily lessons All this will bring you new life and new hope It will bring you solace, contentment and a deep, inner, growing knowledge of the creation of this universe, its preservation and dissolution It will show you that, yes, you are the center of the universe, the Self, the infinite and supreme Paraśiva With this goal well in mind, you will persist in working out the patterns of the past, living in the eternal present while being selective in the new patterns you create in the future As you dance with Śiva from life to life, live with Śiva from life to life, and slowly merge with Śiva, you yourself will fulfill from within yourself the proclamations of the *ṛishis* who spoke forth the *Vedas*, the oldest scripture on our planet You yourself will find, follow and in joyous discovery fulfill the path which all knowers of God tread Aum Namah Śivāya!





# Lexicon

## Śabda Kośa

### शब्दकोश



**aadheenam** ஆதீனம் "Ownership, possession, dependence, Śaiva monastery" A Śaivite Hindu monastery-temple complex in the South Indian, Śaiva Siddhānta tradition, as in "Dharmapuram Aadheenam" Also also known as *maṭha* or *pīṭha*, as in Kailāsa Pīṭha The *aadheenam* head, or pontiff, is called the *guru mahāsannīdhānam* or *aadheenakartar*

**ābhāsa** आभास "Shining out, manifestation, emanation" The means by which Śiva creates out of Himself, a concept central to monistic schools See *emanation*, *tattva*

**abhaya** अभय Fearlessness, one of the cardinal virtues "Fearlessness is the fruit of perfect Self Realization—that is, the recovery of nonduality" (*Bṛihadāranyaka Upanishad* 1 4.2) Also names the *mudrā* (hand pose) common in Hindu icons, betokening "fear not," in which the fingers of the right hand are raised and the palm faces forward See *mudrā*, *mūrti*

**Abhinavagupta** अभिनवगुप्त Kashmir Śaivite *guru* (ca 950–1015) scholar and adept in the lineage of Vasugupta Among his philosophical writings, *Pratyabhijñā Vimarśinī* and *Tantrāloka* are an important basis of Kashmir Śaivism Also an influential theoretician of poetics, dance, drama and classical music, he is said to have disappeared into a cave near Mangam along with 1,200 disciples See *Kashmīr Śaivism*

**abhisheka** अभिषेक "Sprinkling; ablution" Ritual bathing of the Deity's image with water, curd, milk, honey, *ghee*, rosewater, etc A special form of *pūjā* prescribed by Āgamic injunction Also performed in the inauguration of religious and political monarchs and other special blessings See *pūjā*

**abhor (abhorrence)** To detest, hate or find disgusting or repulsive and hence to pull back or shrink from

**abide** To stand firm, remain as one is Not abandoning principles or qualities of character even in the face of difficulties

**abjuration** Renunciation, giving up by oath, as a *sannyāsin* gives up family life See *sannyāsa dharma*.

**ablution** A washing of the body, especially as a religious ceremony

**abode** Home Place where one lives or stays

**abortion** The deliberate termination of pregnancy From the earliest times,

Hindu tradition and scriptures condemn the practice, except when the mother's life is in danger. It is considered an act against *ṛita* and *ahimsā*. Hindu mysticism teaches that the fetus is a living, conscious person, needing and deserving protection (a *Rig Vedic* hymn [7.36.9, RvP, 2469] begs for protection of fetuses). The *Kaushītaki Upanishad* (3.1 UpR, 774) describes abortion as equivalent to killing one's parents. The *Atharva Veda* (6.113.2 HE, 43) lists the fetus slayer, *brūnaghni*, among the greatest of sinners (6.113.2). The *Gautama Dharma Śāstra* (3.3.9 HD, 214) considers such participants to have lost caste. The *Suśruta Samhitā*, a medical treatise (ca 100), stipulates what is to be done in case of serious problems during delivery (*Chikitsāsthāna* Chapter, *Mūdhagarbha*), describing first the various steps to be taken to attempt to save both mother and child. "If the fetus is alive, one should attempt to remove it from the womb of the mother alive" (sūtra 5). If it is dead, it may be removed. In case the fetus is alive but cannot be safely delivered, surgical removal is forbidden for "one would harm both mother and offspring. In an irredeemable situation, it is best to cause the miscarriage of the fetus, for no means must be neglected which can prevent the loss of the mother" (sūtras 10-11).

**Absolute** Lower case (absolute) real, not dependent on anything else, not relative. Upper case (Absolute) Ultimate Reality, the unmanifest, unchanging and transcendent Paraśiva—utterly nonrelational to even the most subtle level of consciousness. It is the Self God, the essence of man's soul. Same as *Absolute Being* and *Absolute Reality* —**absolutely real**. A quality of God Śiva in all three perfections: Paraśiva, Parāśakti and Parameśvara. As such, He is uncreated, unchanging, unevolutionary. See *Parameśvara*, *Parāśakti*, *Paraśiva*.

**absolution** (to absolve) Forgiveness. A freeing from guilt so as to relieve someone from obligation or penalty —atone to compensate or make up for a wrongdoing. *Atonement* can only be done by the person himself, while *absolution* is granted by others, such as a family head, judge or jury. *Exoneration*, the taking away of all blame and all personal *karmic* burden, can only be given by God Śiva. Society would naturally acknowledge and accept this inner transformation by forgiving and forgetting. See *penance*, *sin*.

**absorption** To take in and make part of an existent whole. Known in Sanskrit as *samhāra*, absorption is one of God's five powers (*pañcākṛitya*), synonymous with *destruction* or *dissolution*, but with no negative or frightful implications. All form issues from God and eventually returns to Him. See *Maheśvara*, *Naṭarāja*.

**abstain** To hold oneself back, to refrain from or do without. To avoid a desire, negative action or habit. See *yama-niyama*.

**abyss** A bottomless pit. The dark states of consciousness into which one may fall as a result of serious misbehavior, the seven *chakras* (psychic centers), or *talas* (realms of consciousness), below the *mūlādhāra chakra*, which is lo-

- cated at the base of the spine See *chakra*, *Naraka*, *loka*
- accelerate** To increase the speed of a thing; to intensify its rate of progress
- accordant** In agreement or harmony with
- āchāra** आचार "Conduct, mode of action, behavior, good conduct" Also, custom, tradition, rule of conduct, precept
- āchārya** आचार्य A highly respected teacher The wise one who practices what he preaches A title generally bestowed through *dīkshā* and ordination, such as in the Śivāchārya priest tradition See *dīkshā*
- acosmic pantheism** "No-cosmos, all-is-God doctrine" A Western philosophical term for the philosophy of Śankara It is *acosmic* in that it views the world, or cosmos, as ultimately unreal, and *pantheistic* because it teaches that God (Brahman) is all of existence See *Śankara*, *śad darśana*
- actinic**: Spiritual, creating light From the Greek *aktis*, meaning "ray" Of or pertaining to consciousness in its pure, unadulterated state Describes the extremely rarified superconscious realm of pure *bindu*, of quantum strings, the substratum of consciousness, *śuddha māyā*, from which light first originates *Actinic* is the adjective form of *actinism*, defined in the *Oxford English Dictionary* as "1) the radiation of heat or light, or that branch of philosophy that treats of it, 2) that property or force in the sun's rays by which chemical changes are produced, as in photography" See *actinodic*, *kalā*, *kośa*, *odic*, *tattva*
- actinodic**. Spiritual-magnetic Describes consciousness within *śuddhāśuddha māyā*, which is a mixture of odic and actinic force, the spectrum of the *ājñā chakra*, and to a certain degree the *visuddha chakra* See *tattva*
- adept**. Highly skilled, expert In religion, one who has mastered certain spiritual practices or disciplines An advanced *yogī*
- adharma** अधर्म Opposite of *dharma* Thoughts, words or deeds that transgress divine law Unrighteousness, irreligiousness, demerit See *dharma*, *pāpa*, *sin*
- adhere** To remain attached or faithful, as to a leader, society, principle, etc
- adhyātma** अध्यात्म "Spiritual, soul" The inner, spiritual self or spirit See *ātman*
- adhyātma prasāra** अध्यात्मप्रसार "Spiritual evolution" The gradual maturation of the soul body, *ānandamaya kośa*, through many lives *Prasāra* means, "coming forth, spreading, advance, progress" See *evolution of the soul*
- adhyātma vikāśa** अध्यात्मविकास "Spiritual unfoldment" The blossoming of inner or higher (*adhī*), soul (*ātma*) qualities as a result of religious striving, *sādhana* *Vikāśa* means, "becoming visible, shining forth, manifestation opening," as a flower unfolds its petals, or the *chakras* unfold theirs as a result of *kundalinī* awakening See *spiritual unfoldment*
- Adi Granth** आदिग्रन्थ "First book" The central Sikh scripture, compiled 1603-1604 from the writings of Sikh, Moslem and Hindu holy men, most importantly the beautiful hymns of adoration, called *Jappī*, by Guru Nānak,

the first Sikh Guru In 1699, Gobind Singh, the tenth preceptor, decreed that the living succession would end with him, and this scripture would henceforth serve as Sikhism's *guru*. Its eloquent teachings are in harmony with Hinduism, but for the rejection of the *Vedas* and disavowal of image worship and caste The *Ādi Granth* is enshrined in all Sikh temples (*gurudwaras*) See *Sikhism*

**Ādinātha** आदिनाथ "First Lord" A sage considered the first great preceptor (date unknown) of the Ādinātha Sampradāya, a teaching tradition embodied in the Siddha Siddhānta sect of Śaivism See *Śaivism*, *Nātha*.

**Ādinātha Sampradāya**. आदिनाथसंप्रदाय See *Nātha Sampradāya*.

**Ādiśaiva**. आदिशैव A hereditary priest and teacher of the South Indian Śaiva Siddhānta tradition, Śaivite *brāhmins* descended from the *gotras* of five *ṛishis* and who alone are entitled to conduct rites in Āgamic Śiva temples *Ādiśaiva* and *Śivāchārya* are synonyms for this hereditary priest lineage See *Śivāchārya*.

**adopt**. To take an idea, principle, or even a religion and henceforth live with it and use it as one's own See *conversion to Hinduism*

**adore**. To love greatly, to worship as divine. See *pūjā*

**adorn** To put on ornaments or decorations to make more beautiful, attractive or distinguished See *kalā-64*

**adṛiṣṭa** अदृष्ट "Unseen potency, destiny" The unseen power of one's past *karma* influencing the present life This power is known in the West as fate or destiny, generally not cognized as being of one's own making, but misunderstood as a mysterious, uncontrollable cosmic force See *karma*, *fate*.

**adulate**. To praise or admire greatly, even too much

**adultery** Sexual intercourse between a married man and a woman not his wife, or between a married woman and a man not her husband Adultery is spoken of in Hindu *śāstras* as a serious breach of *dharma*. See *sexuality*

**advaita**. अद्वैत "Non dual, not two" Nonduality or monism The philosophical doctrine that Ultimate Reality consists of a one principle substance, or God Opposite of *dvaita*, dualism Advaita is the primary philosophical stance of the Vedic *Upanishads*, and of Hinduism, interpreted differently by the many *ṛishis*, *gurus*, *panditas* and philosophers See *dvaita-advaita*, *Vedānta*

**Advaita Īśvaravāda** अद्वैत ईश्वरवाद "Nondual and Personal-God-as-Ruler doctrine" The Sanskrit equivalent of *monistic theism* A general term that describes the philosophy of the *Vedas* and *Śaiva Āgamas*, which believes simultaneously in the ultimate oneness of all things and in the reality of the personal Deity See *Advaita*, *Advaita Siddhānta*, *monistic theism*

**Advaita Īśvaravādīn** अद्वैत ईश्वरवादिन् A follower of Advaita Īśvaravāda

**Advaita Siddhānta**. अद्वैत सिद्धान्त "Nondual perfect conclusions" Śaivite philosophy codified in the *Āgamas* which has at its core the nondual (*advaitic*) identity of God, soul and world This monistic-theistic philosophy, unlike

- the Śankara, or Smārta view, holds that *māyā* (the principle of manifestation) is not an obstacle to God Realization, but God's own power and presence guiding the soul's evolution to perfection While Advaita Vedānta stresses *Upanishadic* philosophy, Advaita Siddhānta adds to this a strong emphasis on internal and external worship, *yoga sādhanas* and *tapas* Advaita Siddhānta is a term used in South India to distinguish Tirumular's school from the pluralistic Siddhānta of Meykandar and Aghoraśiva This unified Vedic-Āgamic doctrine is also known as *Siddha Śaiva Siddhānta* It is the philosophy of this contemporary Hindu catechism See *Advaita Īśvaravāda*, *dvaita-advaita*, *monistic theism*, *Śaiva Siddhānta*.
- Advaita Vedānta.** अद्वैत वेदान्त "Nondual end (or essence) of the *Vedas*" Names the monistic schools, most prominently that of Śankara, that arose from the *Upanishads* and related texts See *Vedānta*
- adversity** A condition of misfortune, poverty or difficulty
- advocate** To write or speak in support of an idea, action or practice
- affirmation** *Drīdhavāchana* ("firm statement") A positive declaration or assertion A statement repeated regularly while concentrating on the meaning and mental images invoked, often used to attain a desired result.
- affirmation of faith.** A brief statement of one's faith and essential beliefs See *anbe Sivamayam Satyame Parasivam*
- aftermath** A result or consequence of a happening The events or repercussions following an experience
- Āgama.** आगम "That which has come down" An enormous collection of Sanskrit scriptures which, along with the *Vedas*, are revered as *śruti* (revealed scripture) Dating is uncertain They were part of an oral tradition of unknown antiquity which some experts consider as ancient as the earliest *Vedas*, 5000 to 6000 BCE. The *Āgamas* are the primary source and authority for ritual, *yoga* and temple construction Each of the major denominations—Śaivism, Vaiṣṇavism and Śāktism—has its unique *Āgama* texts Smārtas recognize the *Āgamas*, but don't necessarily adhere to them and rely mainly on the *smṛiti* texts See *Śaiva Āgamas*, *śruti*
- Agastya** अगस्त्य One of 18 celebrated Śaiva *siddhas* (adepts), and accepted as the first grammarian of Tamil language He is said to have migrated from North India to the South His name appears in the *Mahābhārata*, *Rāmāyana* and the *Purāṇas* and was known to ancient Indonesians See *siddha*.
- Aghora** अघोर "Nonterrifying" An aspect of Śiva which, like Rudra, is the personification of His power of dissolution or reabsorption *Ghōra* means "terrific, frightful, terrible, etc" See *Sadāśiva*
- Aghoraśiva** अघोरशिव A Śaivite philosopher of South India who in the 12th century founded a Siddhānta school emphasizing dualistic passages of the *Āgamas* and other early texts The later Meykandar pluralistic philosophy is based partly on Aghoraśiva's teachings See *dvaita-advaita*, *dvaita Siddhānta*, *Śaiva Siddhānta*

**Aghorī** अघोरी “Nonterrifying” An order of Śaiva ascetics thought to be derived from the Kāpālīka order (ca 14th century) Following the *vāmāchāra*, “left-hand ritual of the *tantras*,” they are widely censured for radical practices such as living in cemeteries and using human skulls as eating bowls

**agni** अग्नि “Fire” 1) One of the five elements, *pañchabhūta* 2) God of the element fire, invoked through Vedic ritual known as *yajña*, *agnikāra*, *homa* and *havana* The God *Agni* is the divine messenger who receives prayers and oblations and conveys them to the heavenly spheres See *yajña*.

**agnihotra** अग्निहोत्र “Fire sacrifice” Household rite traditionally performed daily, in which an oblation of milk is sprinkled on the fire See *yajña*

**agnikāra** अग्निकारक “Fire ritual” The Āgamic term for *yajña*. See *yajña*.

**Aham Brahmāsmi** अहं ब्रह्मास्मि “I am God” Famous phrase often repeated in the *Upanishads* In this ecstatic statement of enlightenment, “I” does not refer to the individuality or outer nature, but to the essence of the soul which is ever identical to God Śiva (or Brahman, the Supreme Being) as Satchidānanda and Paraśiva One of four Upanishadic “great sayings,” *mahāvākya*.

**ahamkāra** अहंकार “I-maker” Personal ego The mental faculty of individuation, sense of duality and separateness from others Sense of I-ness, “me” and “mine” *Ahamkāra* is characterized by the sense of I-ness (*abhimāna*), sense of mine-ness, identifying with the body (*madīyam*), planning for one’s own happiness (*mamasukha*), brooding over sorrow (*mamaduhkha*), and possessiveness (*mama idam*) See *ānava*, *ego*, *mind* (individual)

**ahimsā** अहिंसा “Noninjury,” nonviolence or nonhurtfulness Refraining from causing harm to others, physically, mentally or emotionally *Ahimsā* is the first and most important of the *yamas* (restraints) It is the cardinal virtue upon which all others depend See *yama-niyama*

**aikya** ऐक्य “Union, oneness” See *Vīra Śaivism*

**Aitareya Brāhmaṇa** ऐतरेयब्राह्मण Part of the *Rīg Veda* dealing principally with worship and ceremonies of royal inauguration See *Rīg Veda*, *Vedas*

**Aitareya Upanishad** ऐतरेय उपनिषद् Three chapters of the *Aitareya Āraṇyaka* of the *Rīg Veda* expounding the esoterics of ritual, revealing the means of preparing oneself for the deepest spiritual attainments

**Ajita Āgama** अजित आगम Among the 28 *Śaiva Siddhānta Āgamas*, this scripture especially elucidates temple construction, worship and rules for installation of various Śiva icons (*mūrti*) See *mūrti*, *Śaiva Āgamas*

**ājñā chakra** आज्ञाचक्र “Command wheel” The third-eye center See *chakra*

**ākāśa** आकाश “Space” The sky Free, open space Ether, the fifth and most subtle of the five elements—earth, air, fire, water and ether Empirically, the rarified space or ethereal fluid plasma that pervades the universes, inner and outer Esoterically, mind, the superconscious strata holding all that exists and all that potentially exists, wherein all happenings are recorded and can be read by clairvoyants It is through psychic entry into this transcendental *ākāśa* that cosmic knowledge is gathered, and the entire circle of

time—past, present and future—can be known Space, *ākāśa*, in this concept is a positive substance, filled with unseen energies and intelligences, in contrast with the Western conception that space is the absence of everything and is therefore nothing in and of itself The *Advayatāraka Upanishad* (2.1 17) describes five levels of *ākāśa* which can be *yogically* experienced *guna rahita ākāśa* (space devoid of qualities), *parama ākāśa* (supreme space), *mahā ākāśa* (great space), *tattva ākāśa* (space of true existence) and *sūrya ākāśa* (space of the sun) See *mind (universal)*

**akshata** अक्षत “Unbroken” Unmilled, uncooked rice, often mixed with turmeric, offered as a sacred substance during *pūjā*, or in blessings for individuals at weddings and other ceremonies This, the very best food, is the finest offering a devotee can give to God or a wife can give to her husband See *pūjā*

**Allama Prabhu** अल्लमप्रभु A contemporary of *Basavanna* and central figure of Vira Śaivism (ca 1150), the head of an order of 300 enlightened beings which included 60 women Initially a temple drummer, he became an extraordinary *siddha*, mystic and poet. The *Mantra Gopya* are his collected writings See *Basavanna*, *Vira Śaivism*

**allegory** A story in which the character, places and events have symbolic meaning, used to teach ideas and moral principles See *Itihāsa*, *Purāna*.

**all-pervasive** Diffused throughout or existing in every part of the universe See *Satchidānanda*

**aloof** Distant, reserved, withdrawn, drawn back, cool in attitude, not sympathetic with or interested in an idea, project or group of people

**altruistic** Unselfish Showing more concern for others than oneself

**Alvar** ஆழ்வார் “One who rules the Lord through bhakti” A group of renowned saints of the Vaishnava religion (7th–9th century), devotional mystics whose lives and teachings catalyzed to a resurgence of Vaishnavism in Tamil Nadu Their devotional poems are embodied in the *Nalayiram Divya Prabandham*, containing about 4,000 hymns Among the 12 most famous Alvars are Poykai, Pudam, Tirumalisa, Nammalvar, Kulaśekhara, Andal, Tiruppan and Tirumangai A term not to be confused with *Nalvar*, naming the four Samayāchārya Śaivite saints Appar, Sundarar, Sambandar and Manikkavasagar, who were their contemporaries See *Nalvar*, *Nayanar*

**Āmardaka Order** आमर्दक An order of Śaiva *sannyāsins* founded by Āmardaka Tīrthanātha in Andhra Pradesh (ca 775)

**Āmardaka Tīrthanātha** आमर्दक तीर्थनाथ See *Āmardaka Order*

**Ambikā** अम्बिका “Mother” A benign form of the Goddess, one of the central Deities of the Śākta religion, along with Durgā, Kālī and Pārvatī See *Śakti*

**amends** To make amends, to make up for injury or loss that one has caused to another This is done through sincere apology, expressing contrition, public penance, such as *kavadi*, and the abundant giving of gifts See *pāpa, penance*.



**amid** (amidst, amongst) In the middle of, among

**Amman** அம்மன் “Mother” Usually refers to Mariyamman, the “smallpox Goddess,” protectress from plagues, a popular *grāmadevatā* (“village Deity” or tutelary Deity of a locale) There are many Mariyamman temples and shrines in Malaysia, Mauritius and rural areas of South India In the Tamil tradition, *amman* is often appended to the names of various Goddesses, as in Kālī Amman or Draupadī Amman (deified heroine of the *Mahābhārata*) One of the distinguishing features of *grāmadevatā* shrines is that they are not served by *brāhmin* priests See *Śakti, Śāktism*

**amorphous** Of no definite shape or form See *formless*

**amṛitātman** अमृतात्मन् “Immortal soul” See *ātman, jīva, puruṣa, soul*

**amṛita** अमृत “Immortality” Literally, “without death (*mṛita*)” The nectar of divine bliss which flows down from the *sahasrāra chakra* when one enters very deep states of meditation This word is apparently the source of the Greek *amrotos*, the ambrosia, food or drink, of the Gods, which has its Vedic equivalent in the legendary elixir called *soma*, a central element in Vedic rites in which it is venerated as a Divinity

**anāhata chakra** अनाहतचक्र “Wheel of unstruck [sound]” The heart center See *chakra*

**analogy** An explanation of a thing made by comparing it point by point with another thing For example, in the analogy of the potter, the potter represents God and the clay represents the primal substance, or “matter”

**analytical** Prone to looking closely at things, intellectually studying them to understand their nature, meaning and component parts

**ānanda** आनन्द “Bliss” The pure joy—ecstasy or enstasy—of God-consciousness or spiritual experience In its highest sense, *ānanda* is expressed in the famous Vedic description of God *sat-chit-ānanda*, “existence-consciousness-bliss”—the divine or superconscious mind of all souls See *God consciousness, God Realization, Satchidānanda*

**ānandamaya kośa** आनन्दमयकोश “Bliss body” The body of the soul, which ultimately merges with Śiva See *soul, kośa*

**ānanda tāndava** आनन्दताण्डव “Violent dance of bliss” See *Naṭarāja, tāndava*

**ānava mala** आणवमल “Impurity of smallness, finitizing principle” The individualizing veil of duality that enshrouds the soul It is the source of finitude and ignorance, the most basic of the three bonds (*ānava, karina, māyā*) which temporarily limit the soul *Ānava mala* has the same importance in Āgamic philosophy that *māyā-avidyā* has in Vedāntic philosophy The presence of *ānava mala* is what causes the misapprehension about the nature of God, soul and world, the notion of being separate and distinct from God and the universe *Ānava* obscures the natural wisdom, light, unity and humility of the soul and allows spiritual ignorance, darkness, egoity and pride to manifest It is inherent in a maturing soul, like the shell of a

seed When *ānava* is ripe, *anugraha*, "grace," comes, and *ānava* falls away *Ānava* is the root *mala* and the last bond to be dissolved See *evolution of the soul, grace, mala, soul*

*ānavopāya* आणवोपाय "Minute or individual means" See *upāya*.

*Anbe Sivamayam Satyame Parasivam* அன்பே சிவமயம் சத்தியமே பரசிவம் Tamil for "God Śiva is Immanent Love and transcendent Reality" The affirmation of faith which capsulizes the entire creed of the monistic Śaiva Siddhāntin In the Sanskrit language it is *Premaiva Śivamaya, Satyam eva Paraśivah*

*anchorite*. "Hermit" A monk or aspirant who lives alone and apart from society, as contrasted with *cenobite*, a member of a religious order living in a monastery or convent See *monk, nunk*.

*ancillary* Auxiliary Aiding or supporting Supplementary, secondary

*Andal* ஆண்டாள Famed Vaishnava saint of Tamil Nadu One of the Alvars, she lived in the early 9th century and today is venerated as one of South India's greatest *bhakta* poetesses See *Alvar, Vaishnavism*

*Andhra Pradesh (Pradeśa)* आन्ध्रप्रदेश Modern Indian state located on the southeast coast of India north of Tamil Nadu The capital is Hyderabad Language. Telegu Dominant faith Vaishnavism Area 106,000 square miles Population 54 million Famous for its opulent Tirupati Vaishnava temple *anekavāda*. अनेकवाद "Pluralism," or "not-one theology" See *pluralism* *anekavādin* अनेकवादिन् A follower of *anekavāda*

*anew* Again

*anga* अङ्ग "Part, limb" Term for the individual soul in Vira Śaivism The *anga* is of finite intelligence, while Śiva is of infinite intelligence See *Vira Śaivism* *aniconic*. "Without likeness, without image" When referring to a Deity image, *aniconic* denotes a symbol which does not attempt an anthropomorphic (humanlike) or representational likeness An example is the Śivalinga, "mark of God" See *mūrti, Śivalinga*.

*animate-inanimate*: From the Latin *animatus*, "to make alive, fill with breath" These terms indicate the two poles of manifest existence, that which has movement and life (most expressly animals and other "living" beings) and that which is devoid of movement (such as minerals and, to a lesser degree, plants) From a deeper view, however, all existence is alive with movement and possessed of the potent, divine energy of the cosmos See *tattva*.

*añjali mudrā* अञ्जलिमुद्रा "Reverence gesture" Also called *pranāmāñjali* A gesture of respect and greeting, in which the two palms are held softly together and slightly cupped Often accompanied by the verbal salutation "namaskāra," meaning "reverent salutation" The *añjali mudrā* has various forms, including held near the chest in greeting equals, at eye level in greeting one's *guru*, and above the head in salutation to God One form is with the open hands placed side by side, as if by a beggar to receive food, or a worshiper beseeching God's grace in the temple See *mudrā, namaskāra*.

**ankuśa** अकुश Goad, symbol of Lord Gaṇeśa's power to remove obstacles from the devotee's path, and to spur the dullards onward

**annamaya kośa**. अन्नमयकोश "Food sheath" The physical body See *kosa*

**annaprāśana** अन्नप्राशन "Feeding" The childhood sacrament of first solid food See *samskāras of childhood*

**annihilate**. To destroy completely, to reduce to nothing

**antagonism** Opposition, hostility

**antahkarana** अन्तःकरण "Inner faculty" The mental faculty of the astral body, *manomaya kośa*, comprising intellect, instinct and ego—in Sanskrit, *buddhi*, *manas* and *ahamkāra*—which are a three-fold expression of *chitta*, consciousness *Chitta* is sometimes listed as a *tattva*, or part of a *tattva*, at the Prakṛiti level, in Śaiva Siddhānta In Vedānta, *chitta*, "mind stuff," is often understood as a part of *antahkarana*, while in the Śaiva Siddhānta, Yoga and Sāṅkhya Darśanas, it is generally viewed as the total mind, of which *manas*, *buddhi* and *ahamkāra* are the inner faculties Thus, while Vedānta describes *antahkarana* as four-fold, Sāṅkhya and Yoga discuss it as three-fold Siddha Siddhānta views *antahkarana* as five-fold, with the inclusion of *chaitanya* as "higher consciousness" See *consciousness, mind (individual), tattva*.

**Antarloka**. अन्तर्लोक "Inner or in-between world" The astral plane See *loka*

**anthology** A choice collection of prose or poetry excerpts

**antyaśabda** अन्त्यशब्द "Final word" Colophon

**antyeshti** अन्त्येष्टि "Last rites" Funeral See *death, samskāra*.

**anu** अनु A common prefix conveying the meanings "after, near to, under, secondary or subordinate to"

**anubhava**. अनुभव "Perception, apprehension, experience" Personal experience, understanding, impressions on the mind not derived from memory

**anugraha śakti**. अनुग्रहशक्ति "Graceful or favoring power" Revealing grace God Śiva's power of illumination, through which the soul is freed from the bonds of *ānava*, *karma* and *māyā* and ultimately attains liberation, *moksha* Specifically, *anugraha* descends on the soul as *śaktipāta*, the *dikshā* (initiation) from a *satguru* *Anugraha* is a key concept in Śaiva Siddhānta It comes when *ānava mala*, the shell of finitude which surrounds the soul, reaches a state of ripeness, *malaparipāka* See *ānava, grace, Nāṭarāja, śaktipāta*

**anukramanī**. अनुक्रमणी "Succession, arrangement" A table of contents

**anupāya** अनुपाय "Without means" A term used in Kashmir Śaivism to mean spontaneous Self Realization without effort See *upāya*

**anxiety**. State of uneasiness, worry or apprehension See *manas*

**Apasmārapurusha** अपस्मारपुरुष "Forgetful person" The soul under Śiva's foot of obscuring grace, depicted in numerous icons He represents ignorance and heedlessness (Sometimes simply *Apasmāra* ) See *Nāṭarāja*

**apatya** अपत्य "Offspring, child, descendant"

**apex.** Highest point, peak

**apex of creation** The highest or initial movement in the mind that will eventually manifest a creation The quantum level of manifestation See *microcosm-macrocosm, quantum, tattva*.

**Appar** அப்பா "Father" Endearing name for Tirunavukarasu (ca 700), one of four Tamil saints, Samayāchāryas, who reconverted errant Śaivites who had embraced Jainism Calling himself the servant of God's servants, he composed magnificent hymns in praise of Śiva that are reverently sung to this day See *Nalvar, Nayanar, Śaiva Siddhānta*

**apparent.** Appearing, but not necessarily real or true Seeming to be

**Appaya Dikshita** அப்யயதீகித Philosophical genius of South India (1554-1626) who worked to reconcile Vaiṣṇavism and Śaivism, advancing the Śiva Advaita school of Śaivism by his writings, and bolstering other schools by his brilliant summations of their philosophies He is best known for his commentaries on the teachings of Śrīkanṭha Appaya Dikshita also created a manual of Śaiva temple ritual still in use today See *Śiva Advaita*

**apprehend** To mentally seize and hold, to see or understand, to physically detain

**Āranyaka.** आरण्यक "Forest treatise" Third section of each of the four *Vedas* Texts containing esoteric, mystical knowledge, largely on the inner meanings and functions of the Vedic *yajña*, or fire ceremonies See *Vedas*

**ārati.** आरती "Light." The circling or waving of a lamp—usually fed with *ghee*, camphor or oil—before a holy person or the temple Deity at the high point of *pūjā* The flame is then presented to the devotees, each passing his or her hands through it and bringing them to the eyes three times, thereby receiving the blessings Ārati can also be performed as the briefest form of *pūjā*. See *archana, pūjā*

**Arbhuta Tiru Antadi.** அறபுத்த திரு அந்தாதி A poem of 100 verses in praise of Lord Śiva composed in Tamil by the woman Saint Karaikkal Ammaiyar (ca 5th century) See *Nayanar*

**archana.** अर्चन A special, personal, abbreviated *pūjā* done by temple priests in which the name, birthstar and family lineage of a devotee are recited to invoke individual guidance and blessings *Archana* also refers to chanting the names of the Deity, which is a central part of every *pūjā* See. *pūjā*

**Ardhanārī Nāṭeśvara Stotram** अर्धनारीनटेश्वरस्तोत्रम् A short hymn alternately praising Śiva and Śakti as merged in the androgynous image of Ardhanārīśvara See *Ardhanārīśvara*

**Ardhanārīśvara.** अर्धनारीश्वर "Half-female Lord" Lord Śiva in androgynous form, male on the right side and female on the left, indicating that 1) Śiva (like all Mahādevas) is genderless, 2) Śiva is All, inseparable from His energy, Śakti, 3) in Śiva the *idā* (feminine) and the *pingalā* (masculine) *nāḍis* (psychic nerve currents) are balanced so that *sushumnā* is ever active The meditator who balances these through *sādhana* and *yoga* becomes like Śiva

In the unity of Ardhanārīśvara all opposites are reconciled, duality vanishes back into the one source. This icon especially represents Śiva's second perfection: Pure Consciousness (Satchidānanda or Parāśakti). See *kundalīnī, nāḍī, Śakti, Śiva*.

**Ārdra Darśana** आर्द्रदर्शन A ten-day festival ending on Ārdra *nakshatra*, near the full moon of December-January honoring Śiva Natarāja. In Tamil Nadu, each morning at 4 AM, the mystical songs of Saint Manikkavasagar, *Tiruvembavai*, are sung or recited. Unmarried girls go to the temple in small groups to pray for rains, for the welfare of the land and for fine, spiritual husbands. At the famed temple of Chidambaram in Tamil Nadu, Lord Natarāja, the presiding Deity, is taken out for a grand procession in a chariot pulled through the streets by thousands of devotees. See *darśana, Natarāja*.

**arduous** Strenuous, laborious. Difficult to climb, do or accomplish.

**arena** Any place where an event, usually involving struggle or conflict, takes place. The earth is the arena of the soul's evolution. See *evolution of the soul*.

**Aristotle** Greek philosopher (384–322 BCE) who left a profound legacy of writings on metaphysics, ethics, logic and law. A disciple of Plato.

**ārjaya** आर्जव "Steadfastness." See *yama-niyama*.

**Arjuna** अर्जुन A hero of the *Mahābhārata* and central figure of the *Bhagavad Gītā*. See *Bhagavad Gītā*.

**artha** अर्थ "Goal or purpose, wealth, property, money." Also has the meaning of utility, desire. See *dharma, puruṣārtha*.

**Arthaveda** अर्थवेद "Science of statecraft." A class of ancient texts, also called *Nītiśāstras*, on politics, statecraft and much more, forming the *Upaveda* of the *Rig Veda*. The most important text of this group is Kauṭīliya's *Arthaśāstra* (ca 300 BCE) which gives detailed instructions on all areas of government. It embodies the *kṣatriya* perspective of rulership and society. See *Upaveda*.

**Arunagirinathar** அருணகிரிநாதர் South Indian Śaivite poet saint (ca 1500). See *Kandar Anubhūti*.

**Āruneṣya Upaniṣad** आरुण्य उपनिषद् A short *Upaniṣad* dealing with *sannyāsa*. See *sannyāsa*.

**Aryaman** अर्यमन् "Close friend, matchmaker, Sun God." A Vedic Deity who personifies hospitality, the household and *grihastha* life. He presides over matrimonial alliances, and protects tradition, custom and religion. He is also invoked during *śrāddha* (funeral-memorial) ceremonies.

**āsana** आसन "Seat, posture." In *haṭha yoga*, *āsana* refers to any of numerous poses prescribed to balance and tune up the subtle energies of mind and body for meditation and to promote health and longevity. Examples are the shoulder-stand (*sarvāṅgāsana*, "whole body pose") and the lotus pose (*padmāsana*). Each *āsana* possesses unique benefits, affecting the varied inner bodies and releasing energies in different parts of the nervous system. While the physical science of *haṭha yoga* can dramatically influence health

and general well-being, it is primarily a preparation for the deeper *yogas* and meditations. Sivaya Subramuniyaswami has provided a system of 27 *āsanas* to tune the nervous system for meditation and contemplation and to mitigate the burdensome *karmas*, known by the modern term “stress,” built up through the interaction with other people. His 27 *āsanas* are performed in a meditative sequence, not unlike a serene dance, accompanied by certain visualizations and *prāṇāyāmas*. See *haṭha yoga*, *rāja yoga*, *yoga*.

**ascent** Rising or climbing higher. A path that leads upward.

**ascetic.** A person who leads a life of contemplation and rigorous self-denial, shunning comforts and pleasures for religious purposes. See *monk*, *nunk*.

**asceticism.** The austerities of an ascetic. See *sādhana*, *tapas*.

**ash** See *vibhūti*.

**ashtāṅga pranāma.** अष्टाङ्गप्रणाम “Eight-limbed salutation.” See *pranāma*.

**ashtāvaramam** अष्टावरणम् “Eight shields.” Vira Śaivism’s eight aids to faith: *guru*, *Linga*, *jangama* (monk), *vibhūti*, *rudrāksha*, *pādukā*, *prasāda* (bathing water from Śivalinga or *guru*’s feet), and *Pañchākshara Mantra* (Namah Śivāya). See *Vira Śaivism*.

**āśrama** आश्रम “Place of striving.” From *śram*, “to exert energy.” Hermitage, order of the life. Holy sanctuary, the residence and teaching center of a *sādhu*, saint, *swāmī*, ascetic or *guru*; often includes lodging for students. Also names life’s four stages. See *āśrama dharma*, *sādhana*.

**āśrama dharma** आश्रमधर्म “Laws of each order of life.” Meritorious way of life particular to each of the four stages (*āśramas*) of life, following which one lives in harmony with nature and life, allowing the body, emotions and mind to develop and undergo their natural cycles in a most positive way. The four stages are as follows —*brahmacharya*. Studentship, from age 12 to 24 —*grihastha*. Householder, from 24 to 48 —*vānaprastha*. Elder advisor, from 48 to 72. —*sannyāsa*. Religious solitaire, from 72 onward. The first two *āśramas* make up the *pravṛtti mārga*, the way of going toward the world through the force of desire and ambition. The last two are the *nivṛtti mārga*, moving away from the world through introspection and renunciation. See *dharma*, *grihastha dharma*, *sannyāsa dharma*.

**Assam** अस्सम Indian state in the northeast corner of the country, south of Bhutan, almost separated from the rest of India by Bangladesh. Area 30,000 square miles, population 21 million.

**assuage.** To lessen pain or distress, to calm passions or desires.

**asteya.** अस्तेय “Nonstealing.” See *yama-niyama*.

**āstikya.** आस्तिक्य “Faith.” See *faith*, *śraddhā*, *yama-niyama*.

**astral body.** The subtle, nonphysical body (*sūkshma śarīra*) in which the soul functions in the astral plane, the inner world also called *Antarloka*. The astral body includes the *prāṇic* sheath (*prāṇamaya kośa*), the instinctive-intellectual sheath (*manomaya kośa*) and the cognitive sheath (*vijñānamaya kośa*)—with the *prāṇic* sheath dropping off at the death of the physical

body See *kośa*, *soul*.

**astral plane** The subtle world, or *Antarloka*, spanning the spectrum of consciousness from the *viśuddha chakra* in the throat to the *pātāla chakra* in the soles of the feet. The astral plane includes 1) the higher astral plane, *Maharloka*, “plane of balance,” 2) mid-astral plane, *Svarloka*, “celestial plane,” 3) lower astral plane, *Bhuvarkloka*, “plane of atmosphere,” a counterpart or subtle duplicate of the physical plane (consisting of the *Prithuloka* and *Pretaloka*), and 4) the sub-astral plane, *Naraka*, consisting of seven hellish realms corresponding to the seven *chakras* below the base of the spine. In the astral plane, the soul is enshrouded in the astral body, called *sūkshma śarīra*. See *astral body*, *loka*, *Naraka*, *three worlds*.

**astrology** Science of celestial influences. See *jyotiṣa*, *Vedāṅga*.

**asura** असुर “Evil spirit, demon” (Opposite of *sura* “deva, God”) A being of the lower astral plane, *Naraka*. *Asuras* can and do interact with the physical plane, causing major and minor problems in people’s lives. *Asuras* do evolve and are not permanently in this state. See *Naraka*.

**Aśvaghoṣa** अश्वघोष Buddhist scholar, pantheist philosopher (ca 80 BCE–150 CE), and one of the great poets of Indian history. A principal architect of the *Mahāyāna* school. See *pantheism*.

**Aśvin** अश्विन् Vedic heroes—twins, young, handsome, brilliant and agile—who embody the dawn, the transition from darkness to light, and from disease to health. They are physicians of the Gods, and honey is one of their symbols. They also represent duality acting in unison. See *Vedas*, *Rig Veda*.

**atala**. अतल “Bottomless region” The first *chakra* below the *mūlādhāra*, centered in the hips. Region of fear and lust. Corresponds to the first astral netherworld beneath the earth’s surface, called *Put* (“childless”) or *Atala*, the first of seven hellish regions of consciousness. See *chakra*, *loka*, *Naraka*.

**atattva** अतत्त्व “Noncategory, beyond existence” *Atattva* is the negation of the term *tattva*, and is used to describe the indescribable Reality—the Absolute, *Paraśiva*, the Self God—which transcends all 36 categories (*tattvas*) of manifestation. It is beyond time, form and space. And yet, in a mystery known only to the knower—the enlightened mystic—*Paraśakti-nāda*, the first *tattva*, ever comes out of *Paraśiva*. If it were not for *Paraśiva*, nothing could be. *Paraśiva* does not exist to the outer dimensions of cosmic consciousness, but without it, the mind itself would not exist. See *tattva*.

**atha** अथ “Now, then, certainly” An inceptive particle and mark of auspiciousness used to begin sacred works. For example, the first *sūtra* of the *Yoga Sūtras* reads, “Now then (*atha*), an exposition on *yoga*.”

**Atharvaśikhā Upanishad**. अथर्वशिखा उपनिषद् A minor *Upanishad* dealing with the interpretation of *Aum*. See *Upanishad*, *Vedas*.

**Atharva Veda** अथर्ववेद From “*Atharva*,” the name of the *ṛishi* said to have compiled this fourth *Veda*. The *Atharva* consists of 20 books and 720 hymns. Considered the last *Veda* recorded, it consists of mostly original hymns.

(rather than replications from the *Rig Veda*) It is known as the *Veda* of prayer, in recognition of its abundant magical charms and spells It also contains many *Āgama*-like cosmological passages that bridge the earlier Vedic hymns and formulas with the metaphysics of the *Upanishads* See *Vedas*  
**atheism** The rejection of all religion or religious belief, or simply the belief that God or Gods do not exist See *chārvāka*, *materialism*, *nāstika*

**ātman** आत्मन् "The soul, the breath, the principle of life and sensation" The soul in its entirety—as the soul body (*ānandamaya kośa*) and its essence (Parāśakti and Paraśiva) One of Hinduism's most fundamental tenets is that we are the *ātman*, not the physical body, emotions, external mind or personality In Hindu scriptures, *ātman* sometimes refers to the ego-personality, and its meaning must be determined according to context The *Ātma Upanishad* (1–3) describes *ātman*, or *purusha*, as threefold *bāhyātman*, the outer or physical person, *antarātman*, the inner person, excluding the physical form, who perceives, thinks and cognizes, and *Paramātman*, the transcendent Self God within See *Paramātman*, *kośa*, *soul*

**ātmārtha pūjā** आत्मार्तपूजा "Personal worship rite" Home *pūjā* See *pūjā*

**ātmasvarūpa** आत्मस्वरूप "Nature of the soul" See *ātman*, *soul*

**atmosphere** The pervading or surrounding spirit or influence General mood or environment See *sānnidhya*

**atone**. To make amends or reconcile See *absolution*, *penance*, *sin*

**attainment** Something which has been acquired, achieved or reached through effort Spiritual accomplishment Śaiva Siddhānta notes four primary levels of attainment *sālokya* (sharing God's world, the goal of *charyā*), *sāmīpya* (nearness to God, the goal of *kriyā*), *sārūpya* (likeness to God, the goal of *yoga*) and *sāyujya* (union with God, the state of *jñāna*) See *pāda*

**attitude** Disposition State of mind Manner of carrying oneself Manner of acting, thinking or feeling which reveals one's disposition, opinions and beliefs See *conscience*.

**augural** Having to do with divination, prediction or interpreting omens

**Augustine** Catholic bishop saint (354–430) and highly influential theologian

**Aum** ॐ or ओम् Often spelled *Om* The mystic syllable of Hinduism, placed at the beginning of most sacred writings As a *mantra*, it is pronounced *aw* (as in *law*), *oo* (as in *zoo*), *mm* Aum represents the Divine, and is associated with Lord Ganeśa, for its initial sound "aa," vibrates within the *mūlād-hāra*, the *chakra* at the base of the spine upon which this God sits The second sound of this *mantra*, "oo," vibrates within the throat and chest *chakras*, the realm of Lord Murugan, or Kumāra, known by the Hawaiian people as the God Ku The third sound, "mm," vibrates within the cranial *chakras*, *ājñā* and *sahasrāra*, where the Supreme God reigns The dot above, called *anusvāra*, represents the Soundless Sound, *Paranāda* Aum is explained in the *Upanishads* as standing for the whole world and its parts, including



past, present and future. It is from this primal vibration that all manifestation issues forth. Aum is the primary, or *mūla mantra*, and often precedes other *mantras*. It may be safely used for chanting and *japa* by anyone of any religion. Its three letters represent the three worlds and the powers of creation, preservation and destruction. In common usage in several Indian languages, *aum* means “yes, verily” or “hail.” See *nāda*, *Pranava*, *sound*.

**aura** The luminous colorful field of subtle energy radiating within and around the human body, extending out from three to seven feet. The colors of the aura change constantly according to the ebb and flow of one’s state of consciousness, thoughts, moods and emotions. Higher, benevolent feelings create bright pastels, base, negative feelings are darker in color. Thus, auras can be seen and “read” by clairvoyants. The general nature of auras varies according to individual unfoldment. Great mystics have very bright auras, while instinctive persons are shrouded in dull shades. The aura consists of two aspects, the outer aura and the inner aura. The outer aura extends beyond the physical body and changes continuously, reflecting the individual’s moment-to-moment panorama of thought and emotion. The inner aura is much more constant, as it reflects deep-seated subconscious patterns, desires, repressions and tendencies held in the sub-subconscious mind. Those colors which are regularly and habitually reflected in the outer aura are eventually recorded more permanently in the inner aura. The colors of the inner aura permeate out through the outer aura and either shade with sadness or brighten with happiness the normal experiences of daily life. The inner aura hovers deep within the astral body in the chest and torso and looks much like certain “modern-art” paintings, with heavy strokes of solid colors here and there. In Sanskrit, the aura is called *prabhā-mandala*, “luminous circle,” or *dīptachakra*, “wheel of light.” See *mind* (five states), *pāpa*, *punya*.

**Aurobindo Ghosh** A prolific Bengali writer and poet, pantheistic philosopher and *yoga* mystic, widely known as Śrī Aurobindo (1872–1950). He perceived the modern global crisis as marking a period of transition from a dark age to a more enlightened one, when Hinduism will play a preponderant role. He founded the Auroville community in Pondichery, based on *purna* (integral) *yoga* and contributed much to this century’s Hindu revival.

**auspicious** Favorable, of good omen, foreboding well. **Mangala** One of the central concepts in Hindu life. Astrology defines a method for determining times that are favorable for various human endeavors. Much of daily living and religious practice revolves around an awareness of auspiciousness. Endowed with great power and importance, it is associated with times, places and persons. See  *jyotisha*, *muhūrta*, *swastika*, *Tai Pongal*.

**austerity** Self-denial and discipline, physical or mental, performed for various reasons including acquiring powers, attaining grace, conquering the instinctive nature and burning the seeds of past *karmas*. Ranging from simple

deprivations, such as foregoing a meal, to severe disciplines, called *tapas*, such as always standing, never sitting or lying down, even for sleep See *penance, tapas*

**authenticity** Quality of being authentic, or genuine, trustworthy Reliable

**authority** Influence, power or right to give commands, enforce obedience, take action or make final decisions

**Auvaiyar** ஓவையார் A woman saint of Tamil Nadu (ca 200 BCE), a contemporary of Saint Tiruvalluvar, devotee of Lord Ganeśa and Kārttikeya, or Murugan, and one of the greatest literary figures in ancient India. As a young girl, she prayed to have her beauty removed so she would not be forced into marriage and could devote her full life to God She was a great *bhakta* who wrote exquisite ethical works, some in aphoristic style and some in four-line verse Among the most famous are *Attī Chudī*, *Konrai Ventan*, *Ulaka Niti*, *Muturai*, and *Nalvali* Her Tamil primer is studied by children to this day A second Saint Auvaiyar may have lived around the seventh century

**Avantivarman** अवन्तीवर्मन् King of Kashmir (855–883) during whose reign lived Kallāṭa, one of the great exponents of Kashmir Śaivism

**avatāra** अवतार “Descent.” A God born in a human (or animal) body A central concept of Śāktism, Smārtism and Vaiṣṇavism See *incarnation, Ishṭa Devatā, Vaiṣṇavism*

**avidyā** अविद्या “Spiritual ignorance” Wrongful understanding of the nature of reality Mistaking the impermanent for the everlasting

**awareness** *Sākshin*, or *chit* Individual consciousness, perception, knowing, the witness of perception, the “inner eye of the soul” The soul’s ability to sense, see or know and to be conscious of this knowing When awareness is indrawn (*pratyak chetana*), various states of *samādhi* may occur Awareness is known in the Āgamas as *chitsakti*, the “power of awareness,” the inner self and eternal witness See *consciousness, sākshin*

**āyurveda** आयुर्वेद “Science of life” A holistic system of medicine and health native to ancient India This sacred Vedic science is an *Upaveda* of the *Atharva Veda* Three early giants in this field who left voluminous texts are Charaka, Suśruta and Vāgbhata *Āyurveda* covers many areas, including 1) *chikitsā*, general medicine, 2) *śalya*, surgery, 3) *dehavṛtti*, physiology, 4) *nidāna*, diagnosis, 5) *dravyavidyā*, medicine and pharmacology, 6) *agada tantra*, antidote method, 7) *strītantra*, gynecology, 8) *paśu vidyā*, veterinary science, 9) *kaumāra bhritya*, pediatrics, 10) *ūrdhvaṅga*, diseases of the organs of the head, 11) *bhūta vidyā*, demonology, 12) *rasayana*, tonics, rejuvenating, 13) *vājīkarana*, sexual rejuvenation Among the first known surgeons was Suśruta (ca 600 BCE), whose *Suśruta Samhitā* is studied to this day (Hippocrates, Greek father of medicine, lived two centuries later) The aims of *āyurveda* are *āyus*, “long life,” and *ārogya*, “diseaselessness,” which facilitate progress toward ultimate spiritual goals Health is achieved by balancing energies (especially the *doshas*, bodily humors) at all levels of being,

subtle and gross, through innumerable methods, selected according to the individual's constitution, lifestyle and nature. Similar holistic medical systems are prevalent among many communities, including the Chinese, American Indians, Africans and South Americans. See *doshas*.

**āyurveda vaidya** आयुर्वेद वैद्य A practitioner, or physician, of *āyurveda*.

**Ayyappan** ഏയപ്പൻ The popular God of a recently formed sect that focuses on pilgrimage to the top of Sabarimalai, a sacred hill in Kerala, where He is said to appear at night as a divine light. Ayyappan is revered as a son of Vishnu and Śiva (Hari-Hara *putra*). His *vāhana* is the tiger.

**axiom** A rule or maxim that is universally accepted as true.

**axis** A real or imaginary straight line around which a planet rotates. More generally, *axis* means a central line of development.



**backbiting** Speaking maliciously or slanderously about a person who is absent.

**Bādarāyana** बादरायण Author of the *Brahma Sūtras*. See *Brahma Sūtra*.

**balipīṭha** बलिपीठ "Offering place." An inverted lotus-shaped stone atop a pedestal situated near the temple flagpole, *dhvajastambha*. Here devotees are to leave all

negative thoughts as they enter the temple.

**bard** A singer or reciter of epic poems.

**Basavanna** बसवण्ण A 12th-century philosopher, poet and prime minister who reformed and revived Vīra Śaivism in Karnataka. See *Vīra Śaivism*.

**Batara** A name of Śiva used in Indonesia. See *Śiva*.

**Baudhāyana Dharma Śāstra** बौधायनधर्मशास्त्र A book of laws associated with the *Kṛishna Yajur Veda* and governing studentship, marriage, household rituals, civil law, etc. It is followed by *brāhmīns* of Southwest India. See *Dharma Śāstra*, *Kalpa Vedāṅga*.

**bce** Abbreviation for "before common era," referring to dating prior to the year zero in the Western, or Gregorian calendar, system. Thus, 300 BCE was 300 years before the turn of the millennium. Cf. *ce*.

**Being** When capitalized *being* refers to God's essential divine nature—Pure Consciousness, Absolute Reality and Primal Soul (God's nature as a divine Person). Lower case *being* refers to the essential nature of a person, that within which never changes, existence. See *Śiva*.

**benediction** A blessing, especially a spoken one. See *blessing*.

**benevolence** Inclination to do good, charitable, kindly. See *yama-miyama*.

**benign** Good, kindly, doing no harm. See *ahimsā*.

**beseech** To ask of someone earnestly. To solicit with fervor.

**bestow** To offer as a gift. See *dāna*.

**betoken** To indicate, show, offer as a sign of the future. Symbolize.

**betrothal** Mutual pledge to marry, engagement. In Sanskrit, *vāgdāna* or

*nīśchitārtha*. See *samskāras of adulthood*

**bewilder** To baffle or confuse through something complicated or involved  
**bhaga**. भग “Good fortune, happiness” A God of the *Rig Veda*, Lord of wealth, prowess and happiness See *purushārtha*, *Rig Veda*, *wealth*

**Bhagavad Gītā** भगवद् गीता “Song of the Lord” One of the most popular of Hindu writings, a conversation between Lord Kṛishna and Arjuna on the brink of the great battle at Kurukshetra In this central episode of the epic *Mahābhārata* (part of the sixth book), Kṛishna illumines the warrior-prince Arjuna on *yoga*, asceticism, *dharma* and the manifold spiritual path See *Itihāsa*, *Mahābhārata*

**Bhāgavata** भागवत “Relating to God or a God holy, sacred, divine” Pertaining to Vishnu or Kṛishna From *bhaga*, “Gracious lord, patron, good fortune.” The name of a sect of Vaishnavism which arose in the Western part of India after 600 BCE A highly devotional monotheistic faith worshipping God as Kṛishna, Vāsudeva or Vāsudeva-Kṛishna It is believed by scholars to have been one of five religions (along with the Ekāntika, Nārāyaṇiya, Vaikhānasa and Sātvata) that blended to form what was called the Pañcharātra religion in the vicinity of Mathura around 300 BCE Today, the term *Bhāgavata* is often used to refer to the Vaishnavite religion as a whole See *Pañcharātra*, *Vaishnavism*

**Bhāgavata Purāṇa**. भागवतपुराण Also known as *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, a work of 18,000 stanzas A major *Purāṇa* and primary *Vaishnava* scripture, from oral tradition, written down ca 800 It provides the stories of all incarnations of Vishnu, filled with the *bhakti*, inner current of devotion See *Purāṇa*

**Bhairava** भैरव “Terrifying” Lord Śiva as the fiery protector He carries and is represented by a *triśūla* (trident), a symbol often enshrined as guardian at the entrance to Śiva temples See *Śiva*, *triśūla*.

**bhajana** भजन Spiritual song Individual or group singing of devotional songs, hymns and chants See *congregational worship*, *kirtana*

**bhakta**. भक्त “Devotee” A worshiper One who is surrendered in the Divine  
**bhakti** भक्ति “Devotion” Surrender to God, Gods or *guru* *Bhakti* extends from the simplest expression of devotion to the ego-decimating principle of *prapatti*, which is total surrender *Bhakti* is the foundation of all sects of Hinduism, as well as *yoga* schools throughout the world See *bhakti yoga*, *darśana*, *prapatti*, *prasāda*, *sacrifice*, *surrender*, *yajña*.

**bhakti yoga**. भक्तियोग “Union through devotion” *Bhakti yoga* is the practice of devotional disciplines, worship, prayer, chanting and singing with the aim of awakening love in the heart and opening oneself to God’s grace *Bhakti* may be directed toward God, Gods or one’s spiritual preceptor *Bhakti yoga* seeks communion and ever closer rapport with the Divine, developing qualities that make communion possible, such as love, selflessness and purity Saint Sambandar described *bhakti* as religion’s essence and the surest means to divine union and liberation He advised heartfelt worship,

unstinting devotion and complete surrender to God in humble, committed service From the beginning practice of *bhakti* to advanced devotion, called *prapatti*, self-effacement is an intricate part of Hindu, even all Indian, culture *Bhakti yoga* is embodied in Patañjali's Yoga Darśana in the second limb, *niyamas* (observances), as devotion (Īśvarapranidhāna) *Bhakti yoga* is practiced in many Hindu schools, and highly developed in Vaishnavism as a spiritual path in itself, leading to perfection and liberation In Śaiva Siddhānta, its cultivation is the primary focus during the *kriyā pāda* (stage of worship) See *bhakti yoga, prapatti, sacrifice, surrender, yajña*.

**Bhārata.** भारत Ancient and original name of India

**bhāshya.** भाष्य "Speech, discussion" Commentary on a text, especially scripture Hindu philosophies are largely founded upon the various interpretations, or *bhāshyas*, of primary scripture Other types of scriptural commentaries include *vr̥tti*, a brief commentary on aphorisms, less extensive than a *bhāshya*, *tippaṇi*, which is like a *vr̥tti* but less formal, explains difficult words or phrases, *vārttika*, a critical study and elaboration of a *bhāshya*, and *tika* or *vyakhyana*, an explanation of a *bhāshya* or *śāstra* in simpler language

**Bhāskara.** भास्कर Philosopher (ca 950) His *Bhāskarabhāshya*, a commentary on the *Brahma Sūtras*, was the first elaborate criticism of Śankara's *Advaitic* doctrine of *avidyā-māyā*. See *Śankara, Vedānta, Viśiṣṭādvaita*.

**Bhāvalinga** भावलिंग "Mark of existence" Śiva beyond space and time See *atattva, Paraśiva, Śivalinga, Vīra Śaivism*.

**bhedābheda** भेदाभेद "Difference-nondifference" A term in Vedānta which means that soul and world are identical with and yet different from God, in the same way that the waves of an ocean can be seen as being nondifferent from the ocean, yet they are not the ocean, only a part of it. See *Vedānta*

**Bhogarishi.** भोगरक्षि One of the 18 *siddhas* of Śaiva tradition, an alchemist and *tantrika yogī*, associated with the Palani Hills Murugan temple in South India, who created the Dandayūthapaniswāmī *mūrti* from nine poisonous metals He is thought by some to still reside there in a cave Chinese historical records suggest that he came from China. See *siddha, siddhi, tantric*.

**Bhojadeva Paramāra.** भोजदेव परमार Śaivite king, poet, artist and theologian of Gujarat (1018-1060) Author of *Tattvapraśāsa*. Renowned for establishing a systematic, monistic Śaiva Siddhānta, and creating India's then largest artificial lake, 250 miles in length, called Bhojpur See *Tātparyāḍipikā*

**bhṛityāchāra** भृत्याचार "Servant's way" One of the five Vīra Śaiva codes of conduct. See *Pañchāchāra, Vīra Śaivism*

**Bhūloka.** भूलोक "Earth world" The physical plane. See *loka*.

**bhūmikā.** भूमिका "Earth, ground, soil" Preface, introduction to a book. From *bhū*, "to become, exist, arise, come into being"

**Bhuvanloka.** भुवर्लोक "Plane of atmosphere" The second of the seven upper worlds, realm of *svādhishṭhāna chakra*, consisting of the two astral regions closest to the physical plane *Īṭhloka*, "world of ancestors," and *Pretaloka*,

“world of the departed” See *loka*.

**Biṣṇala.** बिज्जल A king in Karnataka associated with the life of *Basavanna*

**bilva.** बिल्व Wood-apple (or bael) tree, *Aegle marmelos*, sacred to Lord Śiva  
Its leaves, picked in threes, are offered in the worship of the Śivalinga The delicious fruit when unripe is used medicinally

**bindu.** बिन्दु “A drop, small particle, dot” 1) The seed or source of creation  
In the 36 *tattvas*, the nucleus or first particle of transcendent light, technically called *Parābindu*, corresponding to the Śakti *tattva* Scientists say the whole universe just before the big bang could fit on the head of a pin—a tremendous point of energy—that is *Parabindu* 2) Small dot worn on the forehead between the eyebrows, or in the middle of the forehead, made of red powder (*kunkuma*), sandalpaste, clay, cosmetics or other substance It is a sign that one is a Hindu Mystically, it represents the “third eye,” or the “mind’s eye,” which sees things that the physical eyes cannot see The forehead dot is a reminder to use and cultivate one’s spiritual vision, to perceive and understand life’s inner workings, as well as to look into the past to see the future The *bindu* is also a beauty mark worn by Hindu women, the color red generally a sign of marriage, black often worn before marriage to ward off the evil eye, *kudṛṣṭi* or *pāpadṛṣṭi* The *bindu* is known as *pottu* in Tamil *Bindu* is also a term for semen See *tattva*, *tilaka*.

**birth chart:** An astrological map of the sky drawn for a person’s moment and place of birth The birth chart is also known as *rāśi chakra* or zodiac wheel  
It is the basis for interpreting the traits of individuals and the experiences, *prarabdha karmas*, they will go through in life See  *jyotiṣha*, *karma*

**birthstar** See *nakshatra*.

**bi-sexual** Of or characterized by sexual attraction for members of both genders See *heterosexual*, *homosexual*, *sexuality*

**blessing** Good wishes, benediction Seeking and giving blessings is extremely central in Hindu life, nurtured in the precepts of *kārunya* (grace), *śakti* (energy), *darśana* (seeing the divine), *prasāda* (blessed offerings), *pūjā* (invocation), *tīrthayātrā* (pilgrimage), *dīkṣhā* (initiation), *śaktipāta* (descent of grace), *samskāras* (rites of passage), *sānnidhya* (holy presence) and *sādhana* (inner-attunement disciplines)

**bodhaka.** बोधक “Teacher” One who awakens or catalyzes knowing, a religious instructor or catalyst

**bodhi tantra.** बोधितन्त्र “Wise methods, ways of wisdom” See *sādhana*, *tantra*.

**bodies** See *kośa*, *śarīra*, *soul*.

**bodily humor** Commonly, the fluids of the body, but in this text used as the English equivalent of the *āyurvedic* term *doṣha*, which names three fundamental interbalancing principles or constituents of the human constitution See *āyurveda*, *doṣha*

**bond (bondage)** See *evolution of the soul*, *mala*, *pāśa*.

**bone-gathering** Part of Hindu funeral rites About twelve hours after

cremation, family men return to the cremation site to collect the remains. Water is first sprinkled on the ashes, which separates the black ash of the wood from the fine, white ash of the body. The white ash and bones (up to four inches long, called flowers) are collected in a tray or brass pot. Some Hindus return the ashes and bones to India for deposition in the Ganges. Or they may be put into any ocean or river. Arrangements can be made with crematoriums in the East or West for the family to personally gather the ash and flowers. See *cremation, death, reincarnation, samskāras of adulthood*.

**boon** A welcome blessing, a benefit received. An unexpected benefit or bonus. See *blessing, grace*.

**bountiful** Giving abundantly and without restraint, plentiful.

**Brahmā** ब्रह्मा The name of God in His aspect of Creator. Śaivites consider Brahmā, Vishnu and Rudra to be three of five aspects of Śiva. Smārtas group Brahmā, Vishnu and Śiva as a holy trinity in which Śiva is the destroyer. *Brahmā* the Creator is not to be confused with 1) *Brahman*, the Transcendent Supreme of the *Upanishads*, 2) *Brāhmaṇa*, Vedic texts, 3) *brāhmaṇa*, the Hindu priest caste (also spelled *brāhmin*). See *Brahman, Parameśvara*.

**brahmachārī** ब्रह्मचारी An unmarried male spiritual aspirant who practices continence, observes religious disciplines, including *sādhana*, devotion and service and who may be under simple vows. Also names one in the student stage, age 12-24, or until marriage. See *āśrama dharma, monk*.

**brahmachārīnī** ब्रह्मचारिणी Feminine counterpart of *brahmachārī*. See *nunk*.

**brahmacharya** ब्रह्मचर्य See *yama-niyama*.

**brahmacharya āśrama** ब्रह्मचर्य आश्रम See *āśrama dharma*.

**brāhma muhūrta** ब्रह्ममुहूर्त "Time of God." A very favorable time for *sādhana*. It is traditional to arise before this period, bathe and begin one's morning worship. *Brāhma muhūrta* is defined as roughly 1.5 hours, the last *muhūrta* of the night in the 8-*muhūrta* system. It is understood as comprising the final three *muhūrtas* of the night in 15 or 16-*muhūrta* systems, equalling 144 minutes or 135 minutes respectively. See *muhūrta*.

**Brahman** ब्रह्मन् "Supreme Being; expansive spirit." From the root *br̥h*, "to grow, increase, expand." Name of God or Supreme Deity in the *Vedas*, where He is described as the 1) Transcendent Absolute, 2) the all-pervading energy and 3) the Supreme Lord or Primal Soul. These three correspond to Śiva in His three perfections. Thus, Śaivites know Brahman and Śiva to be one and the same God. —*Nirguna Brahman*. God "without qualities (*guna*)," i.e., formless, Absolute Reality, Parabrahman, or Paraśiva—totally transcending *guna* (quality), manifest existence and even Paraśakti, all of which exhibit perceivable qualities. —*Saguna Brahman*. God "with qualities," Śiva in His perfections of Paraśakti and Parameśvara—God as superconscious, omnipresent, all-knowing, all-loving and all-powerful. The term Brahman is not to be confused with 1) *Brahmā*, the Creator God, 2) *Brāhmaṇa*, Vedic texts, nor with 3) *brāhmaṇa*, Hindu priest caste (English

- spelling *brāhmin*) See *Parameśvara*, *Parāśakti*, *Paraśiva*
- Brāhmana** ब्राह्मण 1) One of four primary sections of each *Veda*, concerned mainly with details of *yajña*, or sacrificial fire worship, and specific duties and rules of conduct for priests, but also rich in philosophical lore 2) The first of the four *varnas*, or social classes, comprising pious souls of exceptional learning, including priests, educators and humanity's visionary guides Also spelled *brāhmin* See *brāhmin*, *varna dharma*, *Vedas*
- Brahmānda** ब्रह्माण्ड "Egg of God" The cosmos, inner and outer universe See *loka*, *three worlds*, *world*
- brahmarandhira** ब्रह्मरन्ध्र "Door of Brahman" See *door of Brahman*
- Brahma Sūtra(s)** ब्रह्मसूत्र Also known as the *Vedānta Sūtras*, composed by Bādarāyana (ca 400 BCE) as the first known systematic exposition of Upanishadic thought Its 550 aphorisms are so brief as to be virtually unintelligible without commentary It was through interpretations of this text, as well as the *Upanishads* themselves and the *Bhagavad Gītā*, that later schools of Vedānta expressed and formulated their own views of the Upanishadic tenets A third name for this important work is *Śārīraka Sūtras*, "aphorisms on the embodied soul" See *Upanishad*, *Vedānta*
- Brahma Sūtra Bhāṣya** ब्रह्मसूत्रभाष्य A lengthy 13th-century commentary on the *Brahma Sūtras* by Śrīkanṭha to establish a Vedic base for the Śaivite qualified nondualism called Śiva Advaita See *Śiva Advaita*, *Vedānta*
- Brahma Sūtra, Śāṅkara Bhāṣya** ब्रह्मसूत्र शाङ्करभाष्य Śāṅkara's explanation of one of the three major treatises on Vedānta philosophy See *Smārta*
- brāhmin (brāhmana)** ब्राह्मण "Mature or evolved soul" The class of pious souls of exceptional learning From *Brāhman*, "growth, expansion, evolution, development, swelling of the spirit or soul" The mature soul is the exemplar of wisdom, tolerance, forbearance and humility See *varna dharma*.
- brāhminical tradition** The hereditary religious practices of the Vedic *brāhmins*, such as reciting *mantras*, and personal rules for daily living
- Brahmotsava**. ब्रह्मोत्सव "God's festival, or foremost festival" Each temple has one festival of the year which is its major celebration This is called *Brahmotsava*, often a ten-day event See *festival*, *temple*
- Brhadāranyaka Upanishad** बृहदारण्यक उपनिषद् One of the most important *Upanishads*, part of the *Satapatha Brāhmana* of the *Yajur Veda* Ascribed to Sage Yājñavalkya, it teaches modes of worship, meditation and the identity of the individual self with the Supreme Self See *Upanishad*
- Brīhaspati** बृहस्पति "Lord of Prayer" Vedic preceptor of the Gods and Lord of the Word, sometimes identified with Lord Gaṇeśa Also names a great exponent of Śaiva Siddhānta (ca 900) See *Gaṇeśa*.
- brīhatkuṭumba**. बिहत्कुटुम्ब "Extended family" Also called *mahākuṭumba*. See *extended family*, *joint family*
- Buddha** बुद्ध "The enlightened" Usually refers to Siddhārtha Gautama (ca 624–544 BCE), a prince born of the Śākya clan—a Śaivite Hindu tribe that



lived in eastern India on the Nepalese border. He renounced the world and became a monk. After his enlightenment he preached the doctrines upon which followers later founded Buddhism. See *Buddhism*.

**buddhi** बुद्धि “Intellect, reason, logic.” The intellectual or disciplined mind. *Buddhi* is characterized by discrimination (*viveka*), voluntary restraint (*varāgya*), cultivation of calmness (*śānti*), contentment (*santosha*) and forgiveness (*kṣamā*). It is a faculty of *manomaya kośa*, the instinctive-intellectual sheath. See *intellectual mind*, *kośa*, *mind* (individual).

**buddhi chitta** बुद्धिचित्त “Intellectual mind.” See *buddhi*, *intellectual mind*.

**Buddhism** The religion based on the teachings of Siddhārtha Gautama, known as the Buddha (ca 624–544 BCE). He refuted the idea of man’s having an immortal soul and did not preach of any Supreme Deity. Instead he taught that man should seek to overcome greed, hatred and delusion and attain enlightenment through realizing the Four Noble Truths and following the Eightfold Path. Prominent among its holy books is the *Dhammapadam*. Buddhism arose out of Hinduism as an inspired reform movement which rejected the caste system and the sanctity of the *Vedas*. It is thus classed as *nāstika*, “unbeliever,” and is not part of Hinduism. Buddhism eventually migrated out of India, the country of its origin, and now enjoys a following of over 350 million, mostly in Asia. See *Buddha*.



**ca.** Abbreviation for *circa*—Latin for “approximately”—used with dates that are not precise, e.g., ca 650 means “around the year 650.”

**callous** Unfeeling, not sensitive, lacking compassion or pity. See *yama-nyama*.

**camphor** *Karpura*. An aromatic white crystalline solid derived from the wood of camphor trees (or prepared synthetically from pinene), prized as fuel in temple *ārati* lamps. See

*ārati*, *pūjā*.

**canon** The religious laws governing a sect or a religion. Body of accepted or authorized scriptures.

**caste** A hierarchical system, called *varna dharma* (or *jāti dharma*), established in India in ancient times, which determined the privileges, status, rights and duties of the many occupational groups, wherein status is determined by heredity. There are four main classes (*varnas*)—*brāhmin*, *kṣatriya*, *vaiśya* and *śūdra*—and innumerable castes, called *jāti*. See *varna dharma*.

**catalyst** A person or thing acting as a stimulus upon another, whose presence brings about change. Difficulties can be a catalyst for spiritual unfoldment. *Catalyst* is sometimes used to name a teacher or facilitator.

**causal body** *Kāraṇa śarīra*, the inmost body, the soul form, also called *ānandamaya kośa*, “bliss sheath,” and actinic causal body. See *kośa*, *soul*.

**causal plane** Highest plane of existence, *Śivaloka*. See *loka*.

**cause.** *Kāraṇa* Anything which produces an effect, a result —**efficient cause:** (*nimitta kāraṇa*) That which directly produces the effect, that which conceives, makes, shapes, etc., such as the potter who fashions a clay pot, or God who creates the world —**material cause** (*upādāna kāraṇa*) The matter from which the effect is formed, as the clay which is shaped into a pot, or God as primal substance becoming the world —**instrumental cause** (*sahakāri kāraṇa*) That which serves as a means, mechanism or tool in producing the effect, such as the potter's wheel, necessary for making a pot, or God's generative Śakti See *māyā, tattva*

**ce.** Abbreviation for "common era" Equivalent to the abbreviation AD Following a date, it indicates that the year in question comes after the year zero in the Western, or Gregorian calendar, system E.g., 300 CE is 300 years after the turn of the millennium Cf. *bce*.

**celestial** "Of the sky or heavens" Of or relating to the heavenly regions or beings Highly refined, divine

**celibacy** Complete sexual abstinence Also the state of a person who has vowed to remain unmarried See *brahmachārī, brahmacharya*

**centillion** The number 1 followed by 600 zeros An unimaginably large figure  
**ceremony** A formal rite established by custom or authority as proper to special occasions From the Latin *caerimonia*, "awe, reverent rite"

**cf** An abbreviation for "compare" A scholastic notation

**chaitanya** चैतन्य "Spirit, consciousness, especially higher consciousness, Supreme Being" A widely used term, often preceded by modifiers, e.g., *sākshī chaitanya*, "witness consciousness," or *bhakti chaitanya*, "devotional consciousness," or *Śivachaitanya*, "God consciousness" See *chitta, consciousness, mind (five states), Śiva consciousness*

**Chaitanya.** चैतन्य A renowned Vaishnava saint (1485–1534), revered today especially in Bengal and Orissa, remembered for his ecstatic states of devotion He taught a dualistic philosophy in which *bhakti* (devotion) to the divine couple Rādhā and Kṛishna is the only means to liberation Practice revolves mainly around *kīrtana*, devotional singing and dancing He gave prominence to the Gaudiya Vaishnava sect, of which several branches thrive today, including ISKCON See *Kṛishna, Vaishnavism, Vedānta*

**chakra** चक्र "Wheel" Any of the nerve plexes or centers of force and consciousness located within the *inner bodies* of man In the physical body there are corresponding nerve plexuses, ganglia and glands The seven principle *chakras* can be seen psychically as colorful, multi-petaled wheels or lotuses They are situated along the spinal cord from the base to the cranial chamber Additionally, seven *chakras*, barely visible, exist below the spine They are seats of instinctive consciousness, the origin of jealousy, hatred, envy, guilt, sorrow, etc They constitute the lower or hellish world, called *Naraka* or *pātāla*. Thus, there are 14 major *chakras* in all

The seven upper *chakras*, from lowest to highest, are 1) *mūlādhāra* (base

of spine) memory, time and space, 2) *svādhishthāna* (below navel) reason, 3) *manipūra* (solar plexus) willpower, 4) *anāhata* (heart center) direct cognition, 5) *viśuddha* (throat) divine love, 6) *ājñā* (third eye) divine sight, 7) *sahasrāra* (crown of head) illumination, Godliness

The seven lower chakras, from highest to lowest, are 1) *atala* (hips) fear and lust, 2) *vitāla* (thighs) raging anger, 3) *sutāla* (knees) retaliatory jealousy, 4) *talātāla* (calves) prolonged mental confusion, 5) *rasātāla* (ankles) selfishness, 6) *mahātāla* (feet) absence of conscience, 7) *pātāla* (located in the soles of the feet) murder and malice See *pradakṣiṇa*, *Naraka* (also individual *chakra* entries)

**Chālukya** चालुक्य Indian dynasty (450–1189) in the Punjab area Buddhism and Śaivism were prominent. This dynasty completed the Buddhist Ajanta Cave frescoes and advanced the art of Hindu temple building

**chandana** चन्दन “Sandalwood paste” One of the sacred substances offered during *pūjā* and afterwards distributed to devotees as a sacrament (*prasāda*)

**Chandas Vedāṅga** छन्दस् वेदाङ्ग Auxiliary Vedic texts on the metrical rules of poetic writing *Chanda*, meter, is among four linguistic skills taught for mastery of the *Vedas* and the rites of *yajña* *Chandas* means “desire, will, metrical science” The most important text on *Chandas* is the *Chanda Śāstra*, ascribed to Pingala (ca 200 BCE) See *Vedāṅga*

**Chāndogya Upanishad** छान्दोग्य उपनिषद् One of the major *Upanishads*, it consists of eight chapters of the *Chāndogya Brāhmaṇa* of the *Sāma Veda* It teaches the origin and significance of *Aum*, the importance of the *Sāma Veda*, the Self, meditation and life after death See *Upanishad*

**chandra** चन्द्र “The moon” Of central importance in Hindu astrology and in the calculation of the festival calendar Considered the ruler of emotion

**Chārvāka** चार्वाक “Good or sweet voice or word” Indian philosopher (ca 600 BCE) who fashioned the school of pure materialism bearing his name One of the great skeptics of all time See *nāstika*.

**charyā pāda** चर्यापाद “Conduct stage” Stage of service and character building See *pāda*, *Śaiva Siddhānta*, *Śaivism*

**chaturdharma** चतुर्धर्म “Four dharmas” *ṛita*, *āśrama dharma*, *varna dharma* and *svadharma* See *dharma*

**chelā** चेला “Disciple” (Hindi) A disciple of a *guru*, synonym for *śishya*. The feminine equivalent is *chelinā* or *cheli*

**Chellappaswāmī** செல்லப்பாசுவாமி “Wealthy father” Reclusive *siddha* and *satguru* (1840–1915) of the Nandinātha Sampradāya’s Kailāsa Paramparā who lived on Sri Lanka’s Jaffna peninsula near the Nallur Kandaswāmī Temple, in a small hut where today there is a small *samādhi* shrine Among his disciples was Sage Yogaswāmī, whom he trained intensely for five years and initiated as his spiritual successor See *Kailāsa Paramparā*, *Nātha Sampradāya* **Chennabasavanna**. चेन्नबसवण्ण “Little Basavanna” The 12th-century theologian who systematized the religious doctrine of Vira Śaivism

- Chidambaram** சிதம்பரம் “Hall of Consciousness” A very famous South Indian Śiva Naṭarāja temple See *Naṭarāja*
- Chunna Bomman** சினன் பொம்மன் King of Vellore, near Madras (1559-1579), patron and disciple of Appaya Dikshita
- chit:** चित् “Consciousness,” or “awareness” Philosophically, “pure awareness, transcendent consciousness,” as in *Sat-chit-ānanda* In mundane use, *chit* means “to perceive, be conscious” See *awareness, chitta, consciousness, mind (universal), sākshin*
- chitsabhasā** चित्सभा “Hall of consciousness” See *Naṭarāja*.
- chutta.** चित्त “Mind, consciousness” Mind-stuff On the personal level, it is that in which mental impressions and experiences are recorded Seat of the conscious, subconscious and superconscious states, and of the three-fold mental faculty, called *antahkarana*, consisting of *buddhi, manas* and *ahamkāra* See *awareness, consciousness, mind (individual), mind (universal), sākshin*
- chūdākarana.** चूडाकरण Head-shaving sacrament See *samskāra*.
- circumambulate** *Pradakshina* To walk around, usually clockwise See *pradakshina, pūjā*.
- citadel** Fortress, usually situated on a height
- clairaudience** “Clear-hearing” Psychic or divine hearing, *divyaśravaṇa* The ability to hear the inner currents of the nervous system, the *Aum* and other mystic tones Hearing in one’s mind the words of inner-plane beings or earthly beings not physically present Also, hearing the *nādanādi śakti* through the day or while in meditation See *clairvoyance, nāda*
- clairvoyance** “Clear-seeing” Psychic or divine sight, *divyadr̥ṣṭi* The ability to look into the inner worlds and see auras, *chakras, nādis*, thought forms, non-physical people and subtle forces The ability to see from afar or into the past or future—*avadhiyñāna*, “knowing beyond limits” Also the ability to separate the light that illumines one’s thoughts from the forms the light illumines Also, *dūradarśana*, “far-seeing,” the modern Sanskrit term for television in India *Dūradarśin* names a seer or prophet. See *ākāśa*
- coarse.** Of poor quality, gross, rough cut Not fine or refined
- coexistent.** “Existing together”
- cognition** Knowing, perception Knowledge reached through intuitive, superconscious faculties rather than through intellect alone
- cognitive body** *Vijñānamaya kośa* The most refined sheath of the astral, or subtle, body (*sūkshma śarīra*) It is the sheath of higher thought and cognition See *astral body, kośa*
- cohesive** Remaining together, not disintegrating
- coined** Made up, invented
- commemorative** Anything that honors the memory of a departed person or past event. See *śrāddha*
- commencement.** Beginning
- commission** To give an order or power for something to be made or done

- commitment** Dedication or engagement to a long-term course of action
- commune** To communicate closely, sharing thoughts, feelings or prayers in an intimate way To be in close rapport.
- compatible** Capable of combining well, getting along, harmonious
- compensate** To make up for, counteract, recompense
- component.** An element, one of the parts constituting a whole
- comprehend** Understand
- comprehensive** Including much or all
- comprise** To consist of; be composed of
- concealing grace** See *grace, tirodhāna śakti*
- conceive** To form or develop an idea, thought, belief or attitude
- concentration** Uninterrupted and sustained attention See *rāja yoga*
- concept.** An idea or thought, especially a generalized or abstract idea
- conception** Power to imagine, conceive or create Moment when a pregnancy is begun, a new earthly body generated —**the point of conception, the apex of creation** The simple instant that precedes any creative impulse and is therefore the source and summit of the powers of creation or manifestation To become conscious of the point of conception is a great *siddhi*
- concomitant.** Accompanying a condition or circumstance
- concord** Harmony and agreement, peaceful relations
- condone** To forgive, pardon or overlook
- confer** To give or grant, especially an honor or privilege
- confession** An admission of guilt or acknowledgement of wrongdoing
- confidentiality** The ability to keep confidences or information told in trust, not divulging private or secret matters
- confine(s)** Boundary, limits, border To restrict or keep within limits
- conflagration** A large, destructive fire
- conform** To be in accord or agreement with
- conformity** Action in accordance with customs, rules, prevailing opinion
- congregational worship** Worship done as a group, such as synchronized singing, community prayers or other participatory worship by individuals sharing a strict membership to a particular organization, with no other religious affiliations Hindu worship is strongly congregational within *āśramas* and tightly organized societies, but usually noncongregational in the general sphere See *bhajana, kīrtana, pūjā, yajña*
- conquest** Act or process of overcoming
- conscience** The inner sense of right and wrong, sometimes called “the knowing voice of the soul” However, the conscience is affected by the individual’s training and belief patterns, and is therefore not necessarily a perfect reflection of *dharma* In Sanskrit the conscience is known as *antaryāmin*, “inner guide,” or *dharmabuddhi*, “moral wisdom” Other terms are *sada-sadvichāra śakti* “good-bad reflective power” and *samyñāna*, “right conception” It is the subconscious of the person—the sum total of past impres-

sions and training—that defines the creedal structure and colors the conscience and either clearly reflects or distorts superconscious wisdom. If the subconscious has been impressed with Western beliefs, for example, of Christianity, Judaism, existentialism or materialism, the conscience will be different than when schooled in the Vedic *dharma* of Śāktism, Smārtism, Śaivism or Vaiṣṇavism. This psychological law has to do with the superconscious mind working through the subconscious (an interface known as the subsuperconscious) and explains why the *dharma* of one's *sampradāya* must be fully learned as a young child for the conscience to be free of conflict. The Sanātana Dharma, fully and correctly understood provides the purest possible educational creedal structure, building a subconscious that is a clear, unobstructing channel for superconscious wisdom, the soul's innate intelligence, to be expressed through the conscience. Conscience is thus the sum of two things: the superconscious knowing (which is the same in all people) and the creedal belief structure through which the superconscious flows. This explains why people in different cultures have different consciences. See *creed, dharma, mind (individual)*

**conscious mind** The external, everyday state of consciousness. See *mind*.

**consciousness** *Chitta* or *chaitanya* 1) A synonym for mind-stuff, *chitta*, or 2) the condition or power of perception, awareness, apprehension. There are myriad gradations of consciousness, from the simple sentience of inanimate matter to the consciousness of basic life forms, to the higher consciousness of human embodiment, to omniscient states of superconsciousness, leading to immersion in the One universal consciousness, Parāśakti. *Chaitanya* and *chitta* can name both individual consciousness and universal consciousness. Modifiers indicate the level of awareness, e.g., *vyashṭi chaitanya*, "individual consciousness," *buddhi chitta*, "intellectual consciousness," Śivachaitanya, "God consciousness." Five classical "states" of awareness are discussed in scripture: 1) wakefulness (*jāgrat*), 2) "dream" (*svapna*) or astral consciousness, 3) "deep sleep" (*sushupti*) or subsuperconsciousness, 4) the superconscious state beyond (*turiya* "fourth") and 5) the utterly transcendent state called *turiyātita* ("beyond the fourth"). See *awareness, chitta, chaitanya, mind (all entries)*

**consecrate** To declare holy, or designate for sacred or religious use.

**consecrated temple.** A temple duly and fully established in all three worlds through formal religious ceremony known as *kumbhābhisheka*.

**consent:** Accord, agreement, approval, especially for a proposed act.

**console.** To make someone feel less sad or disappointed. To comfort.

**consolidate** To make stronger by bringing several things into a single whole.

**consort.** Spouse, especially of a king or queen, God or Goddess. Among the Gods there are actually no sexes or sexual distinctions, though Hinduism traditionally portrays these great beings in elaborate human-like depictions in mythological folk narratives. Matrimony and human-like family units

among the Gods are derived from educational tales designed to illustrate the way people should and should not live See *Śakti*

**contemplation** Religious or mystical absorption beyond meditation See *enstasy*, *rāja yoga*, *samādhi*

**contend.** To hold as a belief or assert as fact

**continence (continent)** Restraint, moderation or, most strictly, total abstinence from sexual activity See *brahmacharya*

**conversely** A word used to introduce a concept with terms similar to a previous one, but in reversed order

**conversion to Hinduism** Entering Hinduism has traditionally required little more than accepting and living the beliefs and codes of Hindus This remains the basic factor of adoption, although there are, and always have been, formal ceremonies recognizing an individual's entrance into the religion, particularly the *nāmakarana*, or naming rite The most obvious sign of true sincerity of adoption or conversion is the total abandoning of the former name and the choosing of the Hindu name, usually the name of a God or Goddess, and then making it legal on one's passport, identity card, social security card and driver's license This name is used at all times, under all circumstances, particularly with family and friends This is severance This is adoption This is embracing Hinduism This is conversion This is true sincerity and considered by born members as the most honorable and trusted testimony of those who choose to join the global congregation of the world's oldest religion Many temples in India and other countries will ask to see the passport or other appropriate identification before admitting devotees of non-Indian origin for more than casual worship It requires nothing more than one's own commitment to the process Belief is the keynote of religious conviction, and the beliefs vary greatly among the different religions of the world What we believe forms our attitudes, shapes our lives and molds our destiny To choose one's beliefs is to choose one's religion Those who find themselves at home with the beliefs of Hinduism are, on a simple level, Hindu Formally entering a new religion, however, is a serious commitment Particularly for those with prior religious ties it is sometimes painful and always challenging

The acceptance of outsiders into the Hindu fold has occurred for thousands of years As Swāmī Vivekānanda once said, "Born aliens have been converted in the past by crowds, and the process is still going on" Dr S Rādhākṛṣṇan confirms the *swāmī's* views in a brief passage from his well known book *The Hindu View of Life*. "In a sense, Hinduism may be regarded as the first example in the world of a missionary religion Only its missionary spirit is different from that associated with the proselytizing creeds It did not regard it as its mission to convert humanity to any one opinion For what counts is conduct and not belief Worshipers of different Gods and followers of different rites were taken into the Hindu fold The

ancient practice of *vrātyastoma*, described fully in the *Tandya Brāhmaṇa*, shows that not only individuals but whole tribes were absorbed into Hinduism. Many modern sects accept outsiders. *Dvala's Smṛiti* lays down rules for the simple purification of people forcibly converted to other faiths, or of womenfolk defiled and confined for years, and even of people who, for worldly advantage, embrace other faiths (p. 28-29)." See *Hindu, Hinduism* cope. To successfully contend with on equal terms. To face or deal with the difficulties of life.

cosmic Universal, vast. Of or relating to the cosmos or entire universe.

cosmic cycle One of the infinitely recurring periods of the universe, comprising its creation, preservation and dissolution. These cycles are measured in periods of progressive ages, called *yugas*. Satya (or Kṛta), Tretā, Dvāpara and Kali are the names of these four divisions, and they repeat themselves in that order, with the Satya Yuga being the longest and the Kali Yuga the shortest. The comparison is often made of these ages with the cycles of the day: Satya Yuga being morning until noon, the period of greatest light or enlightenment, Tretā Yuga afternoon, Dvāpara evening, and Kali Yuga the darkest part of the night. Four *yugas* equal one *mahāyuga*. Theories vary, but by traditional astronomical calculation, a *mahāyuga* equals 4,320,000 solar years (or 12,000 "divine years," one divine year is 360 solar years)—with the Satya Yuga lasting 1,728,000 years, Tretā Yuga 1,296,000 years, Dvāpara Yuga 864,000 years, and Kali Yuga 432,000 years. Mankind is now experiencing the Kali Yuga, which began at midnight, February 18, 3102 BCE (year one on the Hindu calendar [see Hindu Timeline]) and will end in approximately 427,000 years. (By another reckoning, one *mahāyuga* equals approximately two million solar years.)

A dissolution called *laya* occurs at the end of each *mahāyuga*, when the physical world is destroyed by flood and fire. Each destructive period is followed by the succession of creation (*śṛiṣṭi*), evolution or preservation (*sthiti*) and dissolution (*laya*). A summary of the periods in the cosmic cycles:

1 *mahāyuga* = 4,320,000 years

71 *mahāyugas* = 1 *manvantara* or *manu* (we are in the 28th *mahāyuga*)

14 *manvantaras* = 1 *kalpa* or day of Brahmā (we are in the 7th *manvantara*)

2 *kalpas* = 1 *ahoratra* or day and night of Brahmā

360 *ahoratras* = 1 year of Brahmā

100 Brahmā years = lifespan of Brahmā (or the universe), now in "year" 51

At the end of every *kalpa* or day of Brahmā a greater dissolution, called *pralaya* (or *kalpanta*, "end of an eon"), occurs when both the physical and subtle worlds are absorbed into the causal world, where souls rest until the next *kalpa* begins. This state of withdrawal or "night of Brahmā," continues for the length of an entire *kalpa* until creation again issues forth. After 36,000 of these dissolutions and creations there is a total, universal annihilation, *mahāpralaya*, when all three worlds, all time, form and space, are



withdrawn into God Śiva. After a period of total withdrawal a new universe or lifespan of *Brahmā* begins. This entire cycle repeats infinitely. This view of cosmic time is recorded in the *Purāṇas* and the *Dharma Śāstras*. See *mahāpralaya*.

**Cosmic Dance** See *Naṭarāja*.

**Cosmic Soul** *Purusha* or *Parameśvara*. Primal Soul. The Universal Being, Personal God. See *Parameśvara*, *Primal Soul*, *purusha*, *Śiva*.

**cosmology** "Cosmos-knowledge." The area of metaphysics pertaining to the origin and structure of the universe. Hindu cosmology includes both inner and outer worlds of existence. See *tattva*.

**cosmos** The universe, or whole of creation, especially with reference to its order, harmony and completeness. See *Brahmāṇḍa*, *loka*, *three worlds*, *tattva*.

**covenant**. A binding agreement to do or keep from doing certain things.

**covet**. To want ardently, especially something belonging to another. To envy.

**cranial chakras** The *ājñā*, or third-eye center, and the *sahasrāra*, at the top of the head near the pineal and pituitary glands. See *chakra*.

**creation** The act of creating, especially bringing the world into ordered existence. Also, all of created existence, the cosmos. Creation, according to the monistic-theistic view, is an emanation or extension of God, the Creator. It is Himself in another form, and not inherently something other than Him. See *cause*, *tattva*.

**creator** He who brings about creation. Śiva as one of His five powers. See *creation*, *Naṭarāja*, *Parameśvara*.

**creed** *Śraddhādhāraṇā*. An authoritative formulation of the beliefs of a religion. Historically, creeds have arisen to protect doctrinal purity when religions are transplanted into foreign cultures. See *conscience*.

**cremation** *Dahana*. Burning of the dead. Cremation is the traditional system of disposing of bodily remains, having the positive effect of releasing the soul most quickly from any lingering attachment to the earth plane. In modern times, cremation facilities are widely available in nearly every country, though gas-fueled chambers generally take the place of the customary wood pyre. Embalming, commonly practiced even if the body is to be cremated, is ill-advised, as it injures the astral body and can actually be felt by the departed soul, as would an autopsy. Should it be necessary to preserve the body a few days to allow time for relatives to arrive, it is recommended that hot ice surround the body and that the coffin be kept closed. Arrangements for this service should be made well in advance with the mortuary. Note that the remains of enlightened masters are sometimes buried or sealed in a special tomb called a *samādhi*. This is done in acknowledgement of the extraordinary attainment of such a soul, whose very body, having become holy, is revered as a sacred presence, *sānmidhya*, and which not infrequently becomes the spiritual seed of a temple or place of pilgrimage. See *bone-gathering*, *death*, *reincarnation*, *sānmidhya*.

**cringe** To retreat, bend or crouch in an attitude of fear, especially from something dangerous or painful

**crown *chakra*: *Sahasrāra chakra*** The thousand-petaled cranial center of divine consciousness See *chakra*

**crucial** Of supreme importance, decisive, critical

**crude**. Raw Not prepared or refined Lacking grace, tact or taste Uncultured

**crux**. The essential or deciding point

**culminate** To reach the highest point or climax Result.

**culture** Development or refinement of intellect, emotions, interests, manners, and tastes The ideals, customs, skills and arts of a people or group that are transmitted from one generation to another Culture is refined living that arises in a peaceful, stable society Hindu culture arises directly out of worship in the temples The music, the dance, the art, the subtleties of mannerism and interaction between people all have their source in the humble devotion to the Lord, living in the higher, spiritual nature, grounded in the security of the immortal Self within



***Dakṣināmūrti* दक्षिणामूर्ति** "South-facing form" Lord Śiva depicted sitting under a *pīpala* (bo) tree, silently teaching four *ṛishis* at His feet

***dampatī* दम्पती** "House lord(s)" A term for husband and wife as the dual masters and sovereign guides of the Hindu home (*dama*) See *grihastha dharma*

***dāna* दान** Generosity, giving See *yama-niyama*

**dance**. See *tāndava*, *Naṭarāja*

***danda* दण्ड** "Staff of support." The staff carried by a *sādhu* or *sannyāsin*, representing the *tapas* which he has taken as his only support, and the vivifying of *sushumnā* and consequent Realization he seeks *Danda* also connotes "penalty or sanction" See *sādhu*, *sannyāsin*

***darśana* दर्शन** "Vision, sight" Seeing the Divine Beholding, with inner or outer vision, a temple image, Deity, holy person or place, with the desire to inwardly contact and receive the grace and blessings of the venerated being or beings Even beholding a photograph in the proper spirit is a form of *darsana* Not only does the devotee seek to see the Divine, but to be seen as well, to stand humbly in the awakened gaze of the holy one, even if for an instant, such as in a crowded temple when thousands of worshipers file quickly past the enshrined Lord Gods and *gurus* are thus said to "give" *darśana*, and devotees "take" *darśana*, with the eyes being the mystic locus through which energy is exchanged This direct and personal two-sided apprehension is a central and highly sought-after experience of Hindu faith Also "point of view," doctrine or philosophy See *śad darśana*, *sound*.

**Darwin's theory** Theory of evolution developed by Charles Darwin (1809–1882) stating that plant and animal species develop or evolve from

earlier forms due to hereditary transmission of variations that enhance the organism's adaptability and chances of survival See *evolution of the soul, nonhuman birth*

**daśama bhāga vrata** दशभागव्रत "One-tenth-part vow" A promise that tithers make before God, Gods and their family or peers to tithe regularly each month—for a specified time, or for life, as they wish See *daśamāmsā*.  
**daśamāmsā**. दशमांश "One-tenth sharing" The traditional Hindu practice of tithing, giving one-tenth of one's income to a religious institution It was formerly widespread in India In ancient times the term *makimai* was used in Tamil Nadu See *daśama bhāga vrata, purushārtha*

**dāsa mārṅa** दासमार्ग "Servant's path" See *pāda*

**Daśanāmī** दशनामी "Ten names" Ten monastic orders organized by Ādi Śankara (ca 800) Āranya, Vāna, Gīri, Pārvata, Sāgara, Tīrtha, Āśrama, Bhā-ratī, Pūri and Sarasvatī Also refers to *sannyāsins* of these orders, each of whom bears his order's name, with *ānanda* often attached to the religious name For example, Rāmānanda Tīrtha Traditionally, each order is associated with one of the main Śankarāchārya pīṭhas See *Śankarāchārya pīṭha, Smārta Sampradāya, Śankara*

**daurmanasya** दोर्मनस्य "Mental pain, dejection, sorrow, melancholy and despair" See *chakra*

**dayā** दया "Compassion" See *yama-nyama*

**death** Death is a rich concept for which there are many words in Sanskrit, such as *mahāprasthāna*, "great departure," *samādhimarana*, dying consciously while in the state of meditation, *mahāsamādhi*, "great merger, or absorption," naming the departure of an enlightened soul Hindus know death to be the soul's detaching itself from the physical body and continuing on in the subtle body (*sūkshma sarīra*) with the same desires, aspirations and occupations as when it lived in a physical body Now the person exists in the in-between world, the subtle plane, or Antarloka, with loved ones who have previously died, and is visited by earthly associates during their sleep Hindus do not fear death, for they know it to be one of the most glorious and exalted experiences, rich in spiritual potential Other terms for death include *pañchatvam* (death as dissolution of the five elements), *mṛityu* (natural death), *prāyopaveśa* (self-willed death by fasting), *mārana* (unnatural death, e g , by murder) See *reincarnation, suicide, videhamukti*  
**deceit (deception)** The act of representing as true what is known to be false  
 A dishonest action

**decentralized** Whose administrative agencies, power, authority, etc , are distributed widely, rather than concentrated in a single place or person In Hinduism, authority is decentralized

**decked**. Covered with fine clothing or ornaments

**defiled** Polluted, made dirty, impure

**deformity** Condition of being disfigured or made ugly in body, mind or

emotions

**deha.** देह "Body" From the verb *dih*, "to plaster, mold, anoint, fashion" A term used in the *Upaṇishads*, *yoga* texts, *Śaiva Āgamas*, *Tirumantiram* and elsewhere to name the three bodies of the soul gross or physical (*sthūla*), astral or subtle (*sūkṣma*) and causal (*kāraṇa*) A synonym for *śarīra*. See *śarīra*.

**Deism** A doctrine which believes in the existence of God based on purely rational grounds, a particular faith prominent in the 17th and 18th centuries adhered to by several founding fathers of the United States, including Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson It holds that God created the world and its natural laws but is not involved in its functioning

**Deity** "God" Can refer to the image or *mūrti* installed in a temple or to the Mahādeva the *mūrti* represents See *mūrti*, *pūjā*

**delineate** To mark or trace out the boundaries of a thing, concept, etc

**delude** To fool as by false promises or improper concepts or thinking

**delusion** *Moha* False belief, misconception

**denial** Saying "no" Opposing or not believing in the existence of something

**denomination** A name for a class of things, especially for various religious groupings, sects and subsects See *paramparā*, *sampradāya*

**denote** To indicate, signify or refer to

**deplore.** To be regretful or sorry about, to lament, disapprove

**deploy** To spread out, rearrange into an effective pattern

**deportment** The manner of bearing or conducting oneself, behavior

**depraved** Immoral, corrupt, bad, perverted

**desirous** Having a longing or desire, motivated by desire

**despair** The state of having lost or given up hope

**despise** To strongly dislike, look down upon with contempt or scorn

**destiny** Final outcome The seemingly inevitable or predetermined course of events See *adṛiṣṭa*, *fate*, *karma*

**Destroyer** Term for God Śiva in His aspect of Rudra See *Naṭarāja*.

**deva.** देव "Shining one" A being living in the higher astral plane, in a subtle, nonphysical body *Deva* is also used in scripture to mean "God or Deity" See *Mahādeva*

**Devaloka** देवलोक "Plane of radiant beings" A synonym of Maharloka, the higher astral plane, realm of *anāhata chakra* See *loka*

**devamandira** देवमन्दिर "Abode of celestial beings" From *mand*, "to stand or tarry" A Hindu temple, also simply *mandira* See *temple*.

**Devanāgarī.** देवनागरी "Divine writing of townspeople" The alphabetic script in which Sanskrit, Prakrit, Hindi and Marāṭhī are written A descendant of the Northern type of the Brāhmī script It is characterized by the connecting, horizontal line at the top of the letters See *Sanskrit*.

**Devī.** देवी "Goddess" A name of Śakti, used especially in Śaktism See *Śakti*, *Śaktism*

**Devī Bhāgavata Purāṇa.** देवीभागवतपुराण A subsidiary text of the Śiva

Purāṇas

**Devī Gītā** देवीगीता Twelve chapters (29 to 40) from the 7th book of *Śrīmad Devī Bhāgavatam*, a Śākta scripture It teaches external worship of the Deity with form and meditation on the Deity beyond form

**Devikālottara Āgama** देवीकालोत्तर आगम One recension (version) of the *Sārdha Trisatī Kālottara Āgama*, a subsidiary text of *Vātula Āgama* Also known as *Skanda Kālottara* Its 350 verses are in the form of a dialog between Kārttikeya and Śiva and deal with esoterics of *mantras*, initiations, right knowledge, faith and worship of Śiva See *Śaiva Āgamas*

**Devī Upanishad** देवी उपनिषद् A Śākta *Upanishad* dealing with the nature and worship of the Goddess See *Śāktism*

**devoid** Completely without, empty

**devonic** Of or relating to the *devas* or their world See *deva*

**devotee.** A person strongly dedicated to something or someone, such as to a God or a *guru* The term *disciple* implies an even deeper commitment. See *guru bhakti*

**Dhammapada** धम्मपद The holy book of Buddhism See *Buddhism*

**Dhanurveda.** धनुर्वेद “Science of archery” A class of ancient texts on the military arts, comprising the *Upaveda* of the *Yajur Veda* *Dhanurveda* teaches concentration, meditation, *haṭha yoga*, etc., as integral to the science of warfare See *Upaveda*

**dhāraṇā.** धारणा “Concentration” From *dhṛi*, “to hold” See *meditation, rāja yoga, śraddādādhāraṇā, yoga*.

**dharma** धर्म From *dhṛi*, “to sustain, carry, hold” Hence *dharma* is “that which contains or upholds the cosmos” *Dharma* is a complex and all-inclusive term with many meanings, including: divine law, law of being, way of righteousness, religion, duty, responsibility, virtue, justice, goodness and truth Essentially, *dharma* is the orderly fulfillment of an inherent nature or destiny Relating to the soul, it is the mode of conduct most conducive to spiritual advancement, the right and righteous path There are four principal kinds of *dharma*, as follows They are known collectively as —*chatur-dharma*. “four religious laws” 1) —*ṛita* “Universal law” The inherent order of the cosmos The laws of being and nature that contain and govern all forms, functions and processes, from galaxy clusters to the power of mental thought and perception 2) —*varna dharma*. “Law of one’s kind” Social duty *Varna* can mean “race, tribe, appearance, character, color, social standing, etc” *Varna dharma* defines the individual’s obligations and responsibilities within the nation, society, community, class, occupational subgroup and family An important part of this *dharma* is religious and moral law See *jāti, varna dharma* 3) —*āśrama dharma* “Duties of life’s stages” Human *dharma* The natural process of maturing from childhood to old age through fulfillment of the duties of each of the four stages of life—*brahmachārī* (student), *grihastha* (householder), *vānaprastha* (elder

advisor) and *sannyāsa* (religious solitaire)—in pursuit of the four human goals *dharma* (righteousness), *artha* (wealth), *kāma* (pleasure) and *moksha* (liberation) See *āśrama dharma* 4) —*svadharma* “Personal law” One’s perfect individual pattern through life, according to one’s own particular physical, mental and emotional nature *Svadharma* is determined by the sum of past *karmas* and the cumulative effect of the other three *dharma*s It is the individualized application of *dharma*, dependent on personal *karma*, reflected on one’s race, community, physical characteristics, health, intelligence, skills and aptitudes, desires and tendencies, religion, *sampradāya*, family and guru

Within *āśrama dharma*, the unique duties of man and woman are respectively called *strī dharma* and *puruṣa dharma* —*puruṣa dharma*. “Man’s duty” Man’s proper pattern of conduct, traditional observances, vocation, behavior and attitudes dictated by spiritual wisdom Characterized by leadership, integrity, accomplishment, sustenance of the family Notably, the married man works in the world and sustains his family as abundantly as he can —*strī dharma*. “Woman’s duty” Traditional conduct, observances, vocational and spiritual patterns which bring spiritual fulfillment and societal stability Characterized by modesty, quiet strength, religiousness, dignity and nurturing of family Notably, she is most needed and irreplaceable as the maker of the home and the educator of their children as noble citizens of tomorrow See *grihastha dharma*

A part of the *varna dharma* of each person is *sādhārana dharma*—the principles of good conduct applicable to all people regardless of age, gender or class —*sādhārana dharma* “Duties applicable to all” Listed in the *Manu Sāstras* as *dhairya* (steadfastness), *kṣamā* (forgiveness), *dama* (self-restraint), *chauryābhāva* (nonstealing), *śauca* (cleanliness), *indriyanigraha* (sense control), *dhi* (high-mindedness), *vidyā* (learning), *satya* (veracity), *akrodha* (absence of anger) Another term for such virtues is —*sāmānya dharma*. “general duty,” under which scriptures offer similar lists of ethical guidelines These are echoed and expanded in the *yamas* and *niyamas*, “restraints and observances” See *yama-niyama*.

One other important division of *dharma* indicates the two paths within Hinduism, that of the family person, the *grihastha dharma*, and that of the monastic, the *sannyāsa dharma*. —*grihastha dharma*. “Householder duty” The duties, ideals and responsibilities of all nonmonastics, whether married or unmarried This *dharma*, which includes the vast majority of Hindus, begins when the period of studentship is complete and extends until the end of life See *grihastha dharma*. —*sannyāsa dharma* “Monastic duty” Above and beyond all the other *dharma*s (“*atī-varnāśrama dharma*”) is *sannyāsa dharma*—the ideals, principles and rules of renunciate monks It is the highest *dharma*. See *sannyāsa dharma*.

—*āpad dharma*. “Emergency conduct.” This *dharma* embodies the prin-

ciple that the only rigid rule is wisdom, and thus exceptional situations may require deviating from normal rules of conduct, with the condition that such exceptions are to be made only for the sake of others, not for personal advantage. These are notable exceptions, made in cases of extreme distress or calamity.

—*adharma* “Unrighteousness” Thoughts, words or deeds that transgress divine law in any of the human expressions of *dharma*. It brings the accumulation of demerit, called *pāpa*, while *dharma* brings merit, called *punya*. *Varna adharma* is violating the ideals of social duty, from disobeying the laws of one’s nation to squandering family wealth. *Āśrama adharma* is failure to fulfill the duties of the stages of life. *Sva adharma* is understood as not fulfilling the patterns of *dharma* according to one’s own nature. The *Bhagavad Gītā* states (18.47), “Better one’s *svadharma* even imperfectly performed than the *dharma* of another well performed. By performing the duty prescribed by one’s own nature (*svabhāva*) one incurs no sin (*kil-bisha*).” See *punya*, *pāpa*, *purity-impurity*, *varna dharma*.

*dharmasabha* धर्मसभा “Religious assembly, congregation” A church.

*Dharma Śāstra* धर्मशास्त्र “Religious law book” A term referring to all or any of numerous codes of Hindu civil and social law composed by various authors. The best known and most respected are those by Manu and Yājñavalkya, thought to have been composed as early as 600 BCE. The *Dharma Śāstras*, along with the *Artha Śāstras*, are the codes of Hindu law, parallel to the Muslim *Sharia*, the Jewish *Talmud*, each of which provides guidelines for kings, ministers, judicial systems and law enforcement agencies. These spiritual-parliamentary codes differ from British and American law, which separate religion from politics. (Contemporary British law is influenced by Anglican Christian thought, just as American democracy was, and is, profoundly affected by the philosophy of its non-Christian, Deistic founders.) The *Dharma Śāstras* also speak of much more, including creation, initiation, the stages of life, daily rites, duties of husband and wife, caste, Vedic study, penances and transmigration. The *Dharma Śāstras* are part of the *Smṛiti* literature, included in the *Kalpa Vedāṅga*, and are widely available today in many languages. See *Deism*, *Manu Dharma Śāstras*.

*dhoti*. धोती (Hindi) A long, unstitched cloth wound about the lower part of the body, and sometimes passed between the legs and tucked into the waist. A traditional Hindu apparel for men. See *veshti*.

*dhṛiti* धृति “Steadfastness” See *yama-niyama*.

*dhvaja*. ध्वज “Flag” Part of the pageantry of Hinduism, orange or red flags and banners, flown at festivals and other special occasions symbolize the victory of *Sanātana Dharma*. See *festival*.

*dhvajastambha* ध्वजस्तम्भ “Flag tree, flagpole” (*Kodimaram* in Tamil) A tall cylindrical post usually behind the *vāhana* in Āgamic temples. Metaphysically, it acts as the complementary pole to the enshrined *mūrti*. These two

together create an energy field to contain the temple's power See *temple*.  
*dhyāna* ध्यान "Meditation" See *internalized worship, meditation, rāja yoga*  
*dichotomy* A division into two parts, usually sharply distinguished or contradictory See *paradox*.

*Dieu Siva est amour omniprésent et Réalité transcendante*. French for "God Śiva is Immanent Love and Transcendent Reality" It is an affirmation of faith which capsulizes the entire creed of monistic Śaiva Siddhānta

*differentiation* State or condition of making or perceiving a difference

*dīkṣā*, दीक्षा "Initiation" Action or process by which one is entered into a new realm of spiritual knowledge and practice by a teacher or preceptor through the transmission of blessings Denotes initial or deepened connection with the teacher and his lineage and is usually accompanied by ceremony Initiation, revered as a moment of awakening, may be bestowed by a touch, a word, a look or a thought. As the aspirant matures, he may receive deeper initiations, each one drawing him further into his spiritual being Most Hindu schools, and especially Śaivism, teach that only with initiation from a *satguru* is enlightenment attainable Sought after by all Hindus is the *dīkṣā* called *śaktipāta*, "descent of grace," which, often coming unbidden, stirs and arouses the mystic *kundalinī* force Central Śaivite *dīkṣās* include *śamaya*, *viśeṣha*, *nirvāṇa* and *abhiśeka* See *grace, śaktipāta, sound*

*Dīpāvalī* दीपावली "Row of Lights" A very popular home and community festival during which Hindus of all denominations light oil or electric lights and set off fireworks in a joyful celebration of the victory of good over evil, light over darkness It is a Hindu solidarity day and is considered the greatest national festival of India In several countries, including Nepal, Malaysia, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Trinidad and Tobago, it is an inter-religious event and a national holiday It occurs in October-November

*dipolar* Relating to two poles instead of only one A philosophy is said to be dipolar when it embraces both of two contradictory (or apparently contradictory) propositions, concepts, tendencies, etc For example, panentheism is dipolar in that it accepts the truth of God's being (and being in) the world, and also the truth that He transcends the world Instead of saying "it is either this or that," a dipolar position says "it is both this and that" See *dvaita-advaita*.

*discordant*. Not in accord Disagreeing, clashing; out of harmony

*discrimination* *Viveka*. Act or ability to distinguish or perceive differences

In spirituality, the ability to distinguish between right and wrong, real and apparent, eternal and transient, as in the Upanishadic maxim, *Neti, neti*, "It is not this, it is not that" See *conscience*.

*disheveled* Untidy hair, clothing or general appearance Rumpled

*dismay* Loss of courage or confidence before danger Fearful worry

*dispassionate*. Free from emotion or passion Calm, impartial, detached

*dispatch* To send off promptly, especially on an errand To finish quickly



**dispel.** To cause to go in various directions To scatter and drive away, disperse.  
**dissolution** Dissolving or breaking up into parts An alternative term for destruction See *absorption, mahāpralaya, Naṭarāja*.

**distort.** To twist out of shape To misrepresent.

**divergent.** Going off in different directions, deviating or varying

**Divine Mother** Śakti, especially as Personal Goddess, as conceived of and worshiped by Śāktas See *Śakti, Śāktism*

**dominion** Rulership, domain —**hold dominion over** To be king, ruler, lord, or master of (a world, realm, etc)

**don.** To put on (a piece of clothing)

**door of Brahman** *Brahmarandhra*, also called *nirvāṇa chakra* An aperture in the crown of the head, the opening of *sushumnā nāḍī* through which *kundalinī* enters in ultimate Self Realization, and the spirit escapes at death Only the spirits of the truly pure leave the body in this way *Samsārīs* take a downward course See *jñāna, kundalinī, videhamukti*.

**dormant.** Sleeping, inactive, not functioning

**dosha** दोष “Bodily humor, individual constitution” Refers to three bodily humors, which according to *āyurveda* regulate the body, govern its proper functioning and determine its unique constitution These are *vāta*, the air humor, *pitta*, the fire humor, and *kapha*, the water humor *Vāta* has its seat in the intestinal area, *pitta* in the stomach, and *kapha* in the lung area They govern the creation, preservation and dissolution of bodily tissue *Vāta* humor is metabolic, nerve energy *Pitta* is the catabolic, fire energy *Kapha* is the anabolic, nutritive energy The three *doshas* (*tridosha*) also give rise to the various emotions and correspond to the three *gunas*, “qualities” *sattva* (quiescence—*vāta*), *rajas* (activity—*pitta*) and *tamas* (inertia—*kapha*) See *āyurveda, kapha, pitta, vāta*

**dross** Waste matter, useless byproduct.

**dual** Having or composed of two parts or kinds —**duality** A state or condition of being dual —**realm of duality** The phenomenal world, where each thing exists along with its opposite joy and sorrow, etc —**dualism** See *dvaita-advaita*

**duly** At the proper time, in the proper manner, as required

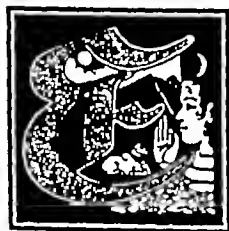
**Durgā** दुर्गा “She who is incomprehensible or difficult to reach” A form of Śakti worshiped in Her gracious as well as terrifying aspect Destroyer of demons, She is worshiped during an annual festival called *Durgā pūjā*, especially popular among Bengalis See *Śakti, Śāktism*

**Durvāsas** दुर्वसस् A great sage (date unknown) who, according to Kashmir Śaivism, was commissioned by Lord Śiva to revive the knowledge of the *Śaiva Āgamas*, whereupon he created three “mind-born” sons—Tryambaka to disseminate *advaita*, Śrīnātha to teach monistic theism, and Āmaradaka to postulate dualism

**dvaita-advaita.** द्वैत अद्वैत “Dual-nondual, twoness-not twoness Among the

most important terms in the classification of Hindu philosophies *Dvaita* and *advaita* define two ends of a vast spectrum —*dvaita* The doctrine of dualism, according to which reality is ultimately composed of two irreducible principles, entities, truths, etc. God and soul, for example, are seen as eternally separate —*dualistic*. Of or relating to dualism, concepts, writings, theories which treat dualities (good-and-evil, high-and-low, them-and-us) as fixed, rather than transcendable —*pluralism* A form of dualism which emphasizes three or more eternally separate realities, e g , God, soul and world —*advaita* The doctrine of nondualism or monism, that reality is ultimately composed of one whole principle, substance or God, with no independent parts. In essence, all is God —*monistic theism* A dipolar view which encompasses both monism and dualism. See *anekavāda*, *dipolar*, *monistic theism*, *pluralistic realism*

*dvaitic (dvaita) Siddhānta* द्वैतसिद्धान्त "Dualistic final conclusions" Refers to schools of Śaiva Siddhānta that postulate God, soul and world as three eternally distinct and separate realities. See *Paṭi-paśu-pāśa*, *Śaiva Siddhānta*.



**earrings** Decorative jewelry worn in the ears by Hindu women and many men. Yogīs, especially those of the Nātha tradition, wear large earrings to stimulate the psychic *nādis* connected to the ears. Traditionally, the ascetic Kanphaṭis ("split-eared ones") split the cartilage of their ears to accommodate massive earrings. Ear-piercing for earrings is said to bring health (right ear)

and wealth (left ear). See *Kanphaṭi*, *samskāras of childhood*

**ecclesiastical** "Of the church or clergy" By extension, relating to the authoritative body of any religion, sect or lineage. Having to do with an assembly of spiritual leaders and their jurisdiction

**ecology** The science of relations between organisms and their environment.

**ecstasy (ecstatic)** State of being overtaken by emotion such as joy or wonder. Literally, "standing outside oneself" See *enstasy*, *samādhi*

**ecumenical** Universal —**ecumenism** the principles or practices of promoting cooperation and better understanding among differing faiths

**efficacious** Producing or capable of producing the desired effect.

**efficient cause** *Nimitta kāraṇa*. That which directly produces the effect, that which conceives, makes, shapes, etc. See *cause*.

**effulgent**. Bright, radiant, emitting its own light.

**egalitarian** Equalitarian. Characterized by the belief in the equal sharing of powers, rights or responsibility among all people

**ego** The external personality or sense of "I" and "mine" Broadly, individual identity. In Śaiva Siddhānta and other schools, the ego is equated with the *tattva* of *ahamkāra*, "I-maker," which bestows the sense of I-ness, individuality and separateness from God. See *ahamkāra*, *ānava*.

**eligible** Qualified, suitable, desirable

**eliminate** To remove, get rid of, reject

**elixir** Hypothetical substance that would change any metal into gold or prolong life indefinitely An English term for *soma*, a magical beverage celebrated in ancient Vedic hymns and which played an important role in worship rites See *amṛita*

**elliptical** Having the shape of an ellipse (more or less egg-shaped)

**elusive** Tending to escape one's grasp or understanding Hard to capture

**emanation** To "flow out from" *Ābhāsa*. To come forth from a source, to be emitted or issued from A monistic doctrine of creation whereby God issues forth manifestation like rays from the sun or sparks from a fire See *ābhāsa*

**emancipator** That which, or one who, liberates

**eminent**. High, above others in stature, rank or achievement Renowned or distinguished, prominent, conspicuous Not to be confused with 1) *imminent*, about to happen, 2) *emanate*, to issue from, 3) *immanent*, inherent or indwelling

**empower** To give power or authority to a person or society Strengthen

**emulate** To imitate To attempt to equal or surpass someone, generally by copying his ways, talents or successes

**encompass** To surround or encircle, to include

**endow** To give To provide with a quality or characteristic

**enhance** To improve, make better

**enlightened** Having attained enlightenment, Self Realization A *jñānī* or *jīvanmukta*. See *jīvanmukta*, *jñāna*, *Self Realization*.

**enlightenment**. For Śaiva monists, Self Realization, *samādhi* without seed (*nirvikalpa samādhi*), the ultimate attainment, sometimes referred to as *Paramātmā darśana*, or as *ātma darsana*, "Self vision" (a term which appears in Patañjali's *Yoga Sūtras*) Enlightenment is the experience-nonexperience resulting in the realization of one's transcendent Self—Paraśiva—which exists beyond time, form and space Each tradition has its own understanding of enlightenment, often indicated by unique terms See *God Realization*, *kundalinī*, *nirvikalpa samādhi*, *Self Realization*

**enshrine**. To enclose in a shrine To hold as sacred and worthy of worship

**enstasy** A term coined in 1969 by Mircea Eliade to contrast the Eastern view of bliss as "standing inside oneself" (enstasy) with the Western view as ecstasy, "standing outside oneself" A word chosen as the English equivalent of *samādhi* See *ecstasy*, *samādhi*, *rāja yoga*.

**enthrall** To hold in a spell, captivate, fascinate

**entourage** A group of accompanying attendants, associates or assistants

**entreat**. To ask earnestly, to beseech, implore, plead or beg

**epic history** Long narrative poem in a high style about grand exploits of Gods and heroes The *Rāmāyana* and *Mahābhārata* are India's two great epic histories, called *Itihāsa* See *Itihāsa*, *Mahābhārata*, *Rāmāyana*.

- equanimity** The quality of remaining calm and undisturbed Evenness of mind, composure
- equilibrium** Evenly balanced A quality of good spiritual leadership "Having attained an equilibrium of *idā* and *pingalā*, he becomes a knower of the known" See *jñāna*
- equivalent** Equal, or nearly so, in quantity, volume, force, meaning, etc
- erotic** "Of love (from the Greek *eros*)" Of or arousing sexual passion
- erroneous** Containing or based on error, wrong
- eschew** To shun, avoid, stay away from
- esoteric** Hard to understand or secret Teaching intended for a chosen few, as an inner group of initiates Abtruse or private
- essence (essential)** The ultimate, real and unchanging nature of a thing or being —essence of the soul See *ātman*, *soul*
- esteem** To respect highly, to value
- estranged** "Made a stranger" Set apart or divorced from
- eternity** Time without beginning or end
- ether** *Ākāśa*. Space, the most subtle of the five elements See *ākāśa*, *tattva*
- ethics** The code or system of morals of a nation, people, religion, etc See *dharma*, *pañcha mitya karmas*, *punya*, *purity-impurity*
- etymology** The science of the origin of words and their development The history of a word See *Nirukta Vedāṅga*, *Sanskṛit*
- evil** That which is bad, morally wrong, causing harm, pain, misery In Western religions, evil is often thought of as a moral antagonism with God This force is the source of sin and is attached to the soul from its inception Whereas, for Hindus, evil is not a conscious, dark force, such as Satan It is situational rather than ontological, meaning it has its basis in relative conditions, not in ultimate reality Evil (badness, corruption) springs from ignorance (*avidyā*) and immaturity Nor is one fighting with God when he is evil, and God is not standing in judgment Within each soul, and not external to it, resides the principle of judgment of instinctive-intellectual actions God, who is ever compassionate, blesses even the worst sinner, the most depraved *asura*, knowing that individual will one day emerge from lower consciousness into the light of love and understanding Hindus hold that evil, known in Sanskrit as *pāpa*, *pāpman* or *dushtā*, is the result of unvirtuous acts (*pāpa* or *adharma*) caused by the instinctive-intellectual mind dominating and obscuring deeper, spiritual intelligence (Note both *pāpa* and *pāpman* are used as nouns and adjectives ) The evil-doer is viewed as a young soul, ignorant of the value of right thought, speech and action, unable to live in the world without becoming entangled in *māyā* —**intrinsic evil** Inherent, inborn badness Some philosophies hold that man and the world are *by nature* imperfect, corrupt or evil Hinduism holds, on the contrary, that there is no intrinsic evil, and the real nature of man is his divine, soul nature, which is goodness See *hell*, *karma*, *pāpa*, *Satan*, *sin*.

**evoke.** To call forth, to conjure up, to summon, as to summon a Mahādeva, a God See *pūjā, yajña*.

**evolution of the soul** *Adhyātma prasāra* In Śaiva Siddhānta, the soul's evolution is a progressive unfoldment, growth and maturing toward its inherent, divine destiny, which is complete merger with Śiva In its essence, each soul is ever perfect But as an individual soul body emanated by God Śiva, it is like a small seed yet to develop As an acorn needs to be planted in the dark underground to grow into a mighty oak tree, so must the soul unfold out of the darkness of the *malas* to full maturity and realization of its innate oneness with God The soul is not created at the moment of conception of a physical body Rather, it is created in the Śivaloka It evolves by taking on denser and denser sheaths—cognitive, instinctive-intellectual and *prāṇic*—until finally it takes birth in physical form in the Bhūloka Then it experiences many lives, maturing through the reincarnation process Thus, from birth to birth, souls learn and mature

Evolution is the result of experience and the lessons derived from it. There are young souls just beginning to evolve, and old souls nearing the end of their earthly sojourn In Śaiva Siddhānta, evolution is understood as the removal of fetters which comes as a natural unfoldment, realization and expression of one's true, self-effulgent nature This ripening or dropping away of the soul's bonds (*mala*) is called *malaparipāka* The realization of the soul nature is termed *svānubhūti* (experience of the Self)

Self Realization leads to *moksha*, liberation from the three *malas* and the reincarnation cycles Then evolution continues in the celestial worlds until the soul finally merges fully and indistinguishably into Supreme God Śiva, the Primal Soul, Paramēśvara In his *Tirumantiram*, Rishi Tirumalar calls this merger *viśvagrāsa*, "total absorption The evolution of the soul is not a linear progression, but an intricate, circular, many-faceted mystery Nor is it at all encompassed in the Darwinian theory of evolution, which explains the origins of the human form as descended from earlier primates See *Darwin's theory, mala, moksha, reincarnation, samsāra, viśvagrāsa*.

**exalt** To make high To raise in status, glorify or praise

**excel** To stand out as better, greater, finer than others To do well at something

**exclusive.** Excluding all others Śaivites believe that there is no exclusive path to God, that no spiritual path can rightly claim that it alone leads to the goal

**exemplar** One regarded as worthy of imitation, a model An ideal pattern to be followed by others

**exhaustive** "Drawn out." Very thorough, covering all details, leaving nothing out

**existence.** "Coming or standing forth" Being; reality, that which is

**experience** From the Latin *experior*, "to prove, put to the test." Living through an event, personal involvement In Sanskrit, *anubhava*.

**expound.** To explain or clarify, point by point

**extended family** *Bṛihatkuṭumba* or *mahākuṭumba* One or more joint families plus their broader associations and affiliations Unlike the joint family, whose members live in close proximity, the extended family is geographically widespread The extended family is headed by the patriarch, called *bṛihatkuṭumba pramukha* (or *mukhya*), recognized as the leader by each joint family He, in turn is under the guidance of the *kulaguru*, or family preceptor It includes the following, in order of their precedence priests of one's faith, elder men and women of the community, in-laws of married daughters, married daughters, granddaughters, great-granddaughters, and the spouses and children of these married girls, members of the staff and their families and those closely associated with the joint family business or home, maternal great-grandparents and grandparents, parents, uncles and their spouses, aunts and their spouses, children and grandchildren of these families, very close friends and their children, members of the community at large See *grihastha*, *grihastha dharma*, *joint family*

**extol.** To praise highly

**exultant.** Rejoicing greatly Immensely happy or triumphant



**fable** Myth or legend A story, usually with animal characters, meant to illustrate moral principles See *mythology*, *Pañchatantra*.

**faith** Trust or belief Conviction From the Latin *fidere*, "to trust" Faith in its broadest sense means "religion, *dharma*" More specifically, it is the essential element of religion—the belief in phenomena beyond the pale of

the five senses, distinguishing it sharply from rationalism Faith is established through intuitive or transcendent experience of an individual, study of scripture and hearing the testimony of the many wise *rishis* speaking out the same truths over thousands of years This inner conviction is based in the divine sight of the third eye center, *ājñā chakra*. Rightly founded, faith transcends reason, but does not conflict with reason Faith also means confidence, as in the testimony and reputation of other people The Sanskrit equivalent is *śraddhā*. Synonyms include *āstikya*, *viśvāsa*, *dharma* and *mati*.

**family life** See *grihastha āśrama*, *extended family*, *joint family*

**far-seeing:** *Dūradarśana* Having the power of clairvoyance, also known as *divyadr̥ṣṭi*, "divine sight." See *clairvoyance*, *siddhi*

**fast:** To abstain from all or certain foods, as in observance of a vow or holy day Hindus fast in various ways A simple fast may consist of merely avoiding certain foods for a day or more, such as when vegetarians avoid *tama-sic* or *rajasic* foods or when nonvegetarians abstain from fish, fowl and meats A moderate fast would involve avoiding heavier foods, or taking only juices, teas and other liquids Such fasts are sometimes observed only

during the day, and a normal meal is permitted after sunset. Serious fasting, which is done under supervision, involves taking only water for a number of days and requires a cessation of most external activities.

**fate** From the Latin *fatum*, “prophetic declaration, oracle.” In Western thought, fate is the force or agency, God or other power, outside man’s control, believed to determine the course of events before they occur. According to Hindu thought, man is not ruled by fate but shapes his own destiny by his actions, which have their concomitant reactions. The Hindu view acknowledges fate only in the limited sense that man is subject to his own past *karmas*, which are a driving force in each incarnation, seemingly out of his own control. But they can be mitigated by how he lives life, meaning how he faces and manages his *prārabdha* (“begun, undertaken”) *karmas* and his *kriyamāna* (“being made”) *karmas*. See *adṛiṣṭa*, *karma*, *destiny*.

**fellowship** Companionship. Mutual sharing of interests, beliefs or practice. A group of people with common interests and aspirations.

**festival** A time of religious celebration and special observances. Festivals generally recur yearly, their dates varying slightly according to astrological calculations. They are characterized by acts of piety (elaborate *pūjās*, penance, fasting, pilgrimage) and rejoicing (songs, dance, music, parades, storytelling and scriptural reading). See *sound*, *teradī*.

**fetch** Retrieve. To go get a thing and bring it back.

**finesse**. Ability to handle situations with skill and delicacy.

**firewalking**: The trance-inducing ceremonial practice of walking over a bed of smoldering, red-hot coals as an expression of faith and sometimes as a form of penance. Participants describe it as a euphoric experience in which no pain is felt and no burns received. Many lose body consciousness during the walk. Firewalking is associated with folk-shamanic Śāktism and is popular among Hindu communities inside and outside India. See *folk-shamanic*, *penance*, *Śāktism*.

**five acts of Śiva** *Pañchakṛtīya*. Creation, preservation, destruction, veiling and revealing. See *Naṭarāja*, *Parameśvara*.

**flux**. Continuous movement or change.

**folk narratives**. Community or village stories which are passed from generation to generation through verbal telling—often a mixture of fact and fiction, allegory and myth, legend and symbolism, conveying lessons about life, character and conduct. The most extensive and influential of India’s folk narratives are the *Purāṇas*. While these stories are broadly deemed to be scriptural fact, this contemporary Hindu catechism accepts them as important mythology—stories meant to capture the imagination of the common peoples and to teach them moral living. See *fable*, *kathā*, *mythology*, *Purāṇa*.

**folk-shamanic**: Of or related to a tribal or village tradition in which the mystic priest, shaman, plays a central role, wielding powers of magic and spirituality. Revered for his ability to influence and control nature and people,

to cause good and bad things to happen, he is the intermediary between man and divine forces The term *shaman* is from the Sanskrit *śramana*, "ascetic," akin to *śraṇi*, "to exert" See *Śāktism*, *shamanism*

**forbearance.** Self-control, responding with patience and compassion, especially under provocation Endurance, tolerance See *yama-niyama*

**formerly** At an earlier time, in the past

**formless:** Philosophically, *atattva*, beyond the realm of form or substance Used in attempting to describe the wondersome, indescribable Absolute, which is "timeless, formless and spaceless" God Śiva has form and is formless He is the immanent Pure Consciousness or pure form He is the Personal Lord manifesting as innumerable forms, and He is the impersonal, transcendent Absolute beyond all form Thus we know Śiva in three perfections, two of form and one formless This use of the term *formless* does not mean *amorphous*, which implies a form that is vague or changing Rather, it is the absence of substance, sometimes thought of as a void, an emptiness beyond existence from which comes the fullness of everything In describing the Self as formless, the words *timeless* and *spaceless* are given also to fully indicate this totally transcendent noncondition See *atattva*, *Paraśiva*, *Satchidānanda*, *void*.

**fortress** A fortified place, a fort

**foster** To help grow or develop

**fountainhead** A spring that is the source of a stream The source of anything

**fruition** The bearing of fruit The coming to fulfillment of something that has been awaited or worked for

**funeral rites** See *cremation*, *bone-gathering*, *śaṁskāras* of later life.



**gaja** गज The elephant, king of beasts, representative of Lord Ganeśa and sign of royalty and power Many major Hindu temples keep one or more elephants

**galactic:** Of or pertaining to our galaxy, the Milky Way (from the Greek *gala*, "milk") and/or other galaxies

**gana(s)** गण "Multitude, troop, number, a body of followers or attendants" A troop of demigods—God Śiva's attendants, devonic helpers under the supervision of Lord Ganeśa See *Ganapati*, *Ganeśa*.

**ganāchāra** गणाचार Loyalty to the community One of five Vira Śaiva codes of conduct. Also, name of a Vira Śaiva saint. See *pañchāchāra*, *Vira Śaivism*

**Ganapati.** गणपति "Leader of the *ganas*" A name of *Ganeśa*.

**Ganapati Upanishad** गणपति उपनिषद् A later *Upanishad* on Lord Ganeśa, not connected with any *Veda*, date of composition is unknown It is a major scripture for the Ganapatians, a minor Hindu sect which reveres Ganeśa as Supreme God and is most prevalent in India's Maharashtra state See



### Ganeśa

**Gāndhārvaveda** गान्धर्ववेद "Science of music" A class of ancient texts on music, song and dance. It is the *Upaveda* of the *Sāma Veda*. See *Upaveda*.  
**Ganeśa** गणेश "Lord of Categories" (From *gan*, "to count or reckon," and *Īśa*, "lord") Or "Lord of attendants (*gana*)," synonymous with *Ganapati*. Ganeśa is a Mahādeva, the beloved elephant-faced Deity honored by Hindus of every sect. He is the Lord of Obstacles (*Vighneśvara*), revered for His great wisdom and invoked first before any undertaking, for He knows all intricacies of each soul's *karma* and the perfect path of *dharma* that makes action successful. He sits on the *mūlādhāra chakra* and is easy of access. Lord Ganeśa is sometimes identified with the Ṛg Vedic God *Bṛihaspati* ("Lord of Prayer, the Holy Word") *Ṛg Veda* 2.23.1. See *gana*, *Ganapati*, *Mahādeva*.

**Ganeśa Chaturthī** गणेश चतुर्थी Birthday of Lord Ganeśa, a ten-day festival of August-September that culminates in a spectacular parade called *Ganeśa Visarjana*. It is a time of rejoicing, when all Hindus worship together.

**Ganeśa Visarjana** गणेश विसर्जन "Ganeśa departure" A parade occurring on the 11th day after Ganeśa Chaturthī, in which the Ganeśa *mūrtis* made for the occasion are taken in procession to a body of water and ceremoniously immersed and left to dissolve. This represents Ganeśa's merging with the ocean of consciousness. See *Ganeśa*.

**Ganges (Gangā)** गंगा India's most sacred river, 1,557 miles long, arising in the Himalayas above Hardwar under the name Bhagiratha, and being named Gangā after joining the Alakanada (where the Sarasvatī is said to join them underground). It flows southeast across the densely populated Gangetic plain, joining its sister Yamunā (or Jumnā) at Prayaga (Allahabad) and ending at the Bay of Bengal. See *Gangetic Plain*.

**Gangetic Plain** The densely populated plain surrounding India's most sacred river, the Ganges (Ganga), an immense, fertile area of 300,000 square miles, 90 to 300 miles wide. See *Ganges*.

**garbha** गर्भ "Womb, interior chamber" The inside or middle of anything.

**garbhādhāna** गर्भाधान "Womb-placing" The rite of conception. See *reincarnation*, *samskāras of birth*.

**garbhagṛha** गर्भगृह The "innermost chamber," *sanctum sanctorum*, of a Hindu temple, where the primary *mūrti* is installed. It is a small, cave-like room, usually made of granite stone, to which only priests are permitted access. Esoterically it represents the cranial chamber. See *temple*.

**gārgya** गार्ग्य One of the known disciples of Lakuliśa. See *Lakuliśa*.

**Gautama** गौतम The name of the founder of the Nyāya school of Śaivism, author of the *Nyāya Sūtras*. Also, the Buddha (*Siddhārtha Gautama*). See *Buddha*, *Buddhism*, *śad darśana*.

**gay** Homosexual, especially a male homosexual, though may also refer to females. See *bisexual*, *homosexual*, *heterosexual*, *sexuality*.

**gāyatrī** गायत्री According with the *gāyatrī* verse form, an ancient meter of

24 syllables, generally as a triplet with eight syllables each From *gāya*, “song” — *Gāyatrī*. The Vedic *Gāyatrī* Mantra personified as a Goddess, mother of the four *Vedas*

**Gāyatrī Mantra.** गायत्रीमन्त्र 1) Famous Vedic *mantra* used in *pūjā* and personal chanting *Om [bhūr bhuvaḥ svaḥ] tatsavitur varenyam, bhargo devasya dhīmahi, dhiyo yo nah prachodayāt* “[O Divine Beings of all three worlds,] we meditate upon the glorious splendor of the Vivifier divine May He Himself illumine our minds” (*Rīg Veda* 3 62 10 VE) This sacred verse is also called the *Sāvitrī* Mantra, being addressed to *Savitṛi*, the Sun as Creator, and is considered a universal mystic formula so significant that it is called *Vedamātrī*, “mother of the *Vedas*” 2) Any of a class of special *tantric mantras* called *Gāyatrī* Each addresses a particular Deity The Śiva *Gāyatrī* Mantra is *Tryambakam yajāmahe sugandhim puṣṭivardhanam, urvārukamīva bandhanān mṛtyormukṣhīya māṃṛtāt* “We adore the fragrant three-eyed one who promotes prosperity May we be freed from the bondage of death as a cucumber from its stalk, but not from immortality” This is a famous verse of *Yajur Veda* (from *Rudranāmaka*, or *Śrī Rudram*), considered an essential *mantra* of Śiva worship used in all Śiva rites

germinate. To sprout. To begin to develop

**ghanṭā.** घण्टा “Bell” Akin to *ghaṇṭ*, “to speak” An important implement in Hindu worship (*pūjā*), used to chase away *asuras* and summon *devas* and Gods See *pūjā*

**ghee.** घी Hindi for clarified butter, *ghṛīta* in Sanskrit Butter that has been boiled and strained An important sacred substance used in temple lamps and offered in fire ceremony, *yajña* It is also used as a food with many virtues and *āyurvedic* virtues See *yajña*.

**Gheranda Saṁhitā** घेरण्डसंहिता A Vaishnava manual on *haṭha yoga* (ca 1675), still influential today, presented as a dialog between Sage Gheranda and a disciple See *haṭha yoga*.

**gloom** Darkness Deep sadness or despair

**go** गो The cow, considered especially sacred for its unbounded generosity and usefulness to humans It is a symbol of the earth as the abundant provider For the Hindu, the cow is a representative of all living species, each of which is to be revered and cared for

**Goddess** Female representation or manifestation of Divinity, Śakti or Devī *Goddess* can refer to a female perception or depiction of a causal-plane being (*Mahādeva*) in its natural state, which is genderless, or it can refer to an astral-plane being residing in a female astral body To show the Divine’s transcendence of sexuality, sometimes God is shown as having qualities of both sexes, e g , *Ardhanārīśvara*, “half-woman God,” or Lord *Naṭarāja*, who wears a feminine earring in one ear and a masculine one in the other

**Godhead** God, Divinity A term describing the essence or highest aspect of the Supreme Being

**God Realization** A term naming the direct and personal experience of the Divine within oneself. It can refer to either 1) *savikalpa samādhi* ("ecstasy with form") in its various levels, from the experience of inner light to the realization of Satchidānanda, the pure consciousness or primal substance flowing through all form, or 2) *nirvikalpa samādhi* ("ecstasy without form"), union with the transcendent Absolute, Paraśiva, the Self God, beyond time, form and space. In *Dancing with Śiva*, the term *God Realization* is used to name both of the above *samādhis*, whereas *Self Realization* refers only to *nirvikalpa samādhi*. See *rāja yoga, samādhi, Self Realization*.

**Gods.** Mahādevas, "great beings of light." In *Dancing with Śiva*, the plural form of *God* refers to extremely advanced beings existing in their self-effulgent soul bodies in the causal plane. The meaning of *Gods* is best seen in the phrase, "God and the Gods," referring to the Supreme God—Śiva—and the Mahādevas who are His creation. See *Mahādeva*.

**God's power** See *Śakti*.

**gopura** गोपुर South Indian temple entrance tower, often quite tall with ornate carvings. See *balipīṭha, temple*.

**Gorakshanātha.** गोरक्षनाथ Profound *siddha yoga* master of the Ādinātha Sampradāya (ca 1000). Expounder and foremost guru of Siddha Siddhānta Śaivism. He traveled and extolled the greatness of Śiva throughout North India and Nepal where he and his guru, Matsyendranātha, are still highly revered. See *haṭha yoga, Siddha Siddhānta, Siddha Siddhānta Paddhati*.

**Gorakhnātha Śaivism** गोरखनाथशैव One of the six schools of Śaivism, also called Siddha Siddhānta. See *Siddha Siddhānta, siddha yoga*.

**Gorakshapantha.** गोरक्षपन्थ "Path of Gorakshanātha." A synonym for Siddha Siddhānta. See *Śaivism Siddha Siddhānta*.

**Gorakshaśataka.** गोरक्षशतक A text by Gorakshanātha, which along with *Siddha Siddhānta Pradīpikā*, extols the path of "Śiva yoga," which is *haṭha-kundalinī yoga* emphasizing control over body and mind, awakening of higher *chakras* and *nāḍī* nerve system with the intent of realizing the Absolute, Parāśamvid, and residing in the *sahasrāra chakra* in perfect identity with Śiva. See *Gorakshanātha, Siddha Siddhānta*.

**gotra** गोत्र "Cowshed." Family lineage or subcaste stemming from a *rishi* or *satguru* and bearing his name. Originally described as several joint families sharing a common cowshed. See *caste, jāti, varna dharma*.

**grace** "Benevolence, love, giving," from the Latin *gratus*, "beloved, agreeable." God's power of revelation, *anugraha śakti* ("kindness, showing favor"), by which souls are awakened to their true, Divine nature. Grace in the unripe stages of the spiritual journey is experienced by the devotee as receiving gifts or boons, often unbidden, from God. The mature soul finds himself surrounded by grace. He sees all of God's actions as grace, whether they be seemingly pleasant and helpful or not. For him, his very love of God, the power to meditate or worship, and the spiritual urge which drives

his life are entirely and obviously God's grace, a divine endowment, an intercession, unrelated to any deed or action he did or could perform

In Śaiva Siddhānta, it is grace that awakens the love of God within the devotee, softens the intellect and inaugurates the quest for Self Realization. It descends when the soul has reached a certain level of maturity, and often comes in the form of a spiritual initiation, called *śaktipāta*, from a *sat-guru*

Grace is not only the force of illumination or revealment. It also includes Śiva's other four powers—creation, preservation, destruction and concealment—through which He provides the world of experience and limits the soul's consciousness so that it may evolve. More broadly, grace is God's ever-flowing love and compassion, *karuṇā*, also known as *krpā* ("tenderness, compassion") and *prasāda* (literally, "clearness, purity")

To whom is God's grace given? Can it be earned? Two famous analogies, that of the monkey (*markaṭa*) and that of the cat (*mārjāra*) express two classical viewpoints on salvation and grace. The *markaṭa* school, perhaps represented more fully by the *Vedas*, asserts that the soul must cling to God like a monkey clings to its mother and thus participate in its "salvation." The *mārjāra* school, which better reflects the position of the *Āgamas*, says that the soul must be like a young kitten, totally dependent on its mother's will, picked up in her mouth by the scruff of the neck and carried here and there. This crucial state of loving surrender is called *prapatti*. See *anugraha śakti*, *prapatti*, *śaktipāta*, *tirodhāna śakti*

**grandeur** Greatness, magnificence, of lofty character, noble

**grantha** ग्रन्थ Literally, "knot," a common name for book—a term thought to refer to the knot on the cord that bound ancient palm-leaf or birch-bark manuscripts. Books are afforded deep respect in Hinduism, always carefully treated, never placed directly on the floor. Special books are not uncommonly objects of worship. *Grantha* also names an ancient literary script developed in South India. See *olai*

**granthavidyā** ग्रन्थविद्या "Book knowledge" Bibliography, booklist, recommended reading

**grihastha** गृहस्थ "Householder" Family man or woman. Family of a married couple and other relatives. Pertaining to family life. The purely masculine form of the word is *grihasthi*. The feminine form is *grihasthinī*. *Grihasthi* also names the home itself. See *āśrama dharma*, extended family, *grihastha dharma*, joint family

**grihastha āśrama** गृहस्थ आश्रम "Householder stage" See *āśrama dharma*

**grihastha dharma** गृहस्थधर्म "Householder law" The virtues and ideals of family life. This *dharma* includes all nonmonastics, whether married, single or gay. In general, *grihastha dharma* begins with the completion of the period of studentship and extends throughout the period of raising a family (called the *grihastha āśrama*). Specific scriptures, called *Dharma Śāstras*

and *Gṛhya Śāstras*, outline the duties and obligations of family life. In Hinduism, family life is one of serving, learning and striving within a close-knit community of many relatives forming a joint family and its broader connections as an extended family under the aegis of a spiritual *guru*. Each is expected to work harmoniously to further the wealth and happiness of the family and the society, to practice religious disciplines and raise children of strong moral fiber to carry on the tradition. Life is called a *jīvayajña*, “self-sacrifice,” for each incarnation is understood as an opportunity for spiritual advancement through fulfilling one’s *dharma* of birth, which is the pattern one chose before entering this world, a pattern considered by many as bestowed by God. In the majority of cases, sons follow in the footsteps of their father, and daughters in those of their mother. All interrelate with love and kindness. Respect for all older than oneself is a keynote. Marriages are arranged and the culture is maintained.

The householder strives to fulfill the four *purushārthas*, “human goals” of righteousness, wealth, pleasure and liberation. While taking care of one’s own family is most central, it is only part of this *dharma*’s expectations. *Gṛhashtas* must support the religion by building and maintaining temples, monasteries and other religious institutions, supporting the monastics and disseminating the teachings. They must care for the elderly and feed the poor and homeless. Of course, the duties of husband and wife are different. The *Tirukural* describes the householder’s central duties as serving these five: ancestors, God, guests, kindred and himself. The *Dharma Śāstras*, similarly, enjoin daily sacrifice to *ṛishis*, ancestors, Gods, creatures and men. See *āśrama dharma*, *extended family*, *joint family*, *yajña*.

**gṛheśvara and gṛhīnī.** गृहेश्वर गृहिणी From *gṛha*, “home,” hence “lord and lady of the home.” The family man, *gṛheśvara* (or *gṛhapati*), and family woman, *gṛhīnī*, considered as master and mistress of their respective realms, so they may fulfill their *purusha* and *strī dharmas*. Implies that both of their realms are equally important and inviolable. See *dharma*.

**Gṛhya Sūtras** गृह्यसूत्र “Household maxims or codes.” An important division of classical *smṛiti* literature, designating rules and customs for domestic life, including rites of passage and other home ceremonies, which are widely followed to this day. The *Gṛhya Sūtras* (or *Śāstras*) are part of the *Kalpa Sūtras*, “procedural maxims” (or *Kalpa Vedāṅga*), which also include the *Śrauta* and *Sulba Śāstras*, on public Vedic rites, and the *Dharma Śāstras* (or *Sūtras*), on domestic-social law. Among the best known *Gṛhya Sūtras* are *Āśvalāyana’s Gṛhya Sūtras* attached to the *R̥g Veda*, *Gobhila’s Sūtras* of the *Sāma Veda*, and the *Sūtras* of *Pāraskara* and *Baudhāyana* of the *Yajur Veda*. See *Kalpa Vedāṅga*, *Vedāṅga*.

**gross plane.** The physical world. See *loka*, *world*, *tattva*.

**Guha.** गुह An epithet of Kārttikeya. “The interior one” — *guhā*. “Cave.” See *Kārttikeya*.

**Guhāvāsī Siddha** गुहावासीसिद्ध A *guru* of central India (ca 675) credited with the modern founding of Śaiva Siddhānta in that area, based fully in Sanskrit *Guhāvāsī*—literally “cave-dweller, he who is hidden”—is also a name of Lord Śiva

**Guheśvara** गुहेश्वर “Lord of the cave” A name for Lord Śiva implying His presence in the heart or the interior of all beings

**Gujarāt.** गुजरात State of West India Capital is Ahmedabad, population 40,000,000, area 75,670 square miles

**guna.** गुण “Strand, quality” The three constituent principles of *prakṛiti*, primal nature The three *gunas* are as follows —*sattva* Quiescent, rarified, translucent, pervasive, reflecting the light of Pure Consciousness —*rajas* “Passion,” inherent in energy, movement, action, emotion, life —*tamas* “Darkness,” inertia, density, the force of contraction, resistance and dissolution The *gunas* are integral to Hindu thought, as all things are composed of the combination of these qualities of nature, including *āyurveda*, arts, environments and personalities See *āyurveda*, *prakṛiti*, *tattva*

**Gurkhā.** गुरुखा A Rajput people of the mountains of Nepal, famed warriors

**guru** गुरु “Weighty one,” indicating a being of great knowledge or skill A term used to describe a teacher or guide in any subject, such as music, dance, sculpture, but especially religion For clarity, the term is often preceded by a qualifying prefix Hence, terms such as *kulaguru* (family teacher), *vīnaguru* (*vīna* teacher) and *satguru* (spiritual preceptor) In Hindu astrology, *guru* names the planet Jupiter, also known as *Bṛhaspati* According to the *Advaitatāraka Upanishad* (14–18), *guru* means “dispeller (*gu*) of darkness (*ru*)” See *guru-śishya system*, *satguru*

**guru bhakti** गुरुभक्ति Devotion to the teacher The attitude of humility, love and ideation held by a student in any field of study In the spiritual realm, the devotee strives to see the *guru* as his higher Self By attuning himself to the *satguru*’s inner nature and wisdom, the disciple slowly transforms his own nature to ultimately attain the same peace and enlightenment his *guru* has achieved *Guru bhakti* is expressed through serving the *guru*, meditating on his form, working closely with his mind and obeying his instructions See *guru*, *satguru*, *guru-śishya system*, *Kulārṇava Tantra*.

**Gurudeva** गुरुदेव “Divine or radiant preceptor” An affectionate, respectful name for the *guru* See *guru*

**Guru Gītā** गुरु गीता “Song of the guru” A popular 352-verse excerpt from the *Skanda Purāṇa*, wherein Lord Śiva tells Pārvatī of the *guru*-disciple relationship See *guru*

**Guru Jayantī.** गुरु जयन्ती Preceptor’s birthday, celebrated as an annual festival by devotees A *pādapūjā*, ritual bathing of his feet, is usually performed If he is not physically present, the *pūjā* is done to the *śrī pādukā*, “holy sandals,” which represent the *guru* and hold his vibration See *pādapūjā*.

**gurukula** गुरुकुल A training center where young boys live and learn in resi-

dence with their teacher *Kula* means "family" See *āśrama*, *brahmacharya*. *guru paramparā* गुरुपरंपरा "Preceptorial succession" (literally, "from one to another") A line of spiritual *gurus* in authentic succession of initiation, the chain of mystical power and authorized continuity, passed from *guru* to *guru* Cf *sampradāya*.

*Guru Pūrnimā*. गुरु पूर्णिमा Occurring on the full moon of July, *Guru Pūrnimā* is for devotees a day of rededication to all that the *guru* represents It is occasioned by *pādapūjā*—ritual worship of the *guru*'s sandals, which represent his holy feet See *guru-śishya system*

*guru-śishya system* गुरुशिष्य "Master-disciple system" An important education system of Hinduism whereby the teacher conveys his knowledge and tradition to a student Such knowledge, whether it be Vedic-Āgamic art, architecture or spirituality, is imparted through the developing relationship between *guru* and disciple The principle of this system is that knowledge, especially subtle or advanced knowledge, is best conveyed through a strong human relationship based on ideals of the student's respect, commitment, devotion and obedience, and on personal instruction by which the student eventually masters the knowledge the *guru* embodies See *guru*, *guru bhakti*, *satguru*

*gush* To flow out suddenly and plentifully



hallowed Sacred

*hamsa* हंस "Swan," more accurately, the high-flying wild goose *Anser indicus* The *vāhana*, vehicle, of the God *Brahmā* It has various meanings, including Supreme Soul and individual soul It is a noble symbol for an adept class of renunciates (*paramahansa*)—winging high above the mundane, driving straight toward the

goal, or of the discriminating *yogī* who—like the graceful swan said to be able to extract milk from water—can see the Divine and leave the rest The *hamsa mantra* indicates the sound made by the exhalation (*ha*) and inhalation (*sa*) of the breath See *paramahansa*

*Harīhara* हरिहर "Vishnu-Śiva" Also known as Śankaranārāyaṇa, an icon of the Supreme One, in which the right half is Śiva and left half is Vishnu It symbolizes the principle that Śiva and Vishnu are not two separate Deities See *Brahmā*, *mūrti*, *Paramesvara*, *Vishnu*

*haṭha yoga* हठयोग "Forceful yoga" *Haṭha yoga* is a system of physical and mental exercise developed in ancient times as a means of rejuvenation by *rishis* and *tapasvins* who meditated for long hours, and used today in preparing the body and mind for meditation Its elements are 1) postures (*āsana*), 2) cleansing practices (*dhauti* or *shodhana*), 3) breath control (*prāṇāyāma*), 4) locks (*bandha*, which temporarily restrict local flows of *prāṇa*) and 5) hand gestures (*mudrā*), all of which regulate the flow of *prāṇa*

and purify the inner and outer bodies *Haṭha yoga* is broadly practiced in many traditions It is the third limb (*anga*) of Patañjali's *rāja yoga* It is integral to the Śaiva and Śākta *tantra* traditions, and part of modern *āyurveda* treatment In the West, *haṭha yoga* has been superficially adopted as a health-promoting, limbering, stress-reducing form of exercise, often included in aerobic routines Esoterically, *ha* and *ṭha*, respectively, indicate the microcosmic sun (*ha*) and moon (*ṭha*), which symbolize the masculine current, *pingalā nāḍī*, and feminine current, *idā nāḍī*, in the human body The most popular *haṭha yoga* manuals are *Haṭha Yoga Pradīpikā* and the *Gheranda Samhitā* See *āsana*, *kundalinī*, *nāḍī*, *yoga*, *rāja yoga*

*Haṭha Yoga Pradīpikā* हठयोगप्रदीपिका "Light on *haṭha yoga*" A 14th-century text of 389 verses by Svātmārāma Yogin which describes the philosophy and practices of *haṭha yoga* It is widely used in *yoga* schools today

*havana* हवन "Fire pit for sacred offering, making oblations through fire" Synonymous with *homa* *Havis* and *havya* name the offerings See *Agni*, *homa*, *yaṅiā*

*heart chakra* *Anāhata chakra* Center of direct cognition See *chakra*

*heaven* The celestial spheres, including the causal plane and the higher realms of the subtle plane, where souls rest and learn between births, and mature souls continue to evolve after *moksha* Heaven is often used by translators as an equivalent to the Sanskrit *Svarga*. See *loka*.

*heed*. To pay close attention to, especially to follow instructions carefully

*hell* *Naraka* An unhappy, mentally and emotionally congested, distressful area of consciousness Hell is a state of mind that can be experienced on the plane of physical existence or in the sub-astral plane (*Naraka*) after the death of the physical body It is accompanied by the tormented emotions of hatred, remorse, resentment, fear, jealousy and self-condemnation However, in the Hindu view, the hellish experience is not permanent, but a temporary condition of one's own making See *asura*, *loka*, *Naraka*, *purgatory*, *Satan*.

*hereditary* Ancestral Passed down through family lines For example, it is Hindu family *dharma* for the son to be taught everything that the father knows and the daughter to learn everything the mother knows Thus they inherit knowledge, control of mind and emotions, as well as property

*heresy* Belief, thought or opinion that opposes official or established views Rejecting orthodox doctrines, especially those of a church or religion

*heterodox*. "Different opinion" Opposed to or departing from established doctrines or beliefs Opposite of *orthodox*, "straight opinion" See *nāstika*.

*heterosexual*. Of or characterized by sexual attraction for only members of the opposite sex. See *bisexual*, *homosexual*, *sexuality*

*hierarchy* A group of beings arranged in order of rank or class, as a hierarchy of God, Gods and *devas*

*higher-nature, lower nature* Expressions indicating man's refined, soulful qualities on the one hand, and his base, instinctive qualities on the other



See *kośa*, *mind* (five states), *soul*

**high soul** See *soul*.

**Himālayas** हिमालय "Abode of snow" The mountain system of South-Central Asia extending along the India-Tibet border and through Pakistan, Nepal and Bhutan

**himsā** हिंसा "Injury, harm, hurt" Injuriousness, hostility—mental, verbal or physical See *ahimsā*

**Hindu** हिन्दु A follower of, or relating to, Hinduism Generally, one is understood to be a Hindu by being born into a Hindu family and practicing the faith, or by declaring oneself a Hindu Acceptance into the fold is recognized through the name-giving sacrament, a temple ceremony called *nāmakarana samskāra*, given to born Hindus shortly after birth, and to self-declared Hindus who have proven their sincerity and been accepted by a Hindu community Full conversion is completed through disavowal of previous religious affiliations and legal change of name While traditions vary greatly, all Hindus rely on the *Vedas* as scriptural authority and generally attest to the following nine principles 1) There exists a one, all-pervasive Supreme Being who is both immanent and transcendent, both creator and unmanifest Reality 2) The universe undergoes endless cycles of creation, preservation and dissolution 3) All souls are evolving toward God and will ultimately find *moksha*, spiritual knowledge and liberation from the cycle of rebirth Not a single soul will be eternally deprived of this destiny 4) *Karma* is the law of cause and effect by which each individual creates his own destiny by his thoughts, words and deeds 5) The soul reincarnates, evolving through many births until all *karmas* have been resolved 6) Divine beings exist in unseen worlds, and temple worship, rituals, sacraments, as well as personal devotionals, create a communion with these *devas* and Gods 7) A spiritually awakened master or *satguru* is essential to know the Transcendent Absolute, as are personal discipline, good conduct, purification, self-inquiry and meditation 8) All life is sacred, to be loved and revered, and therefore one should practice *ahimsā*, nonviolence 9) No particular religion teaches the only way to salvation above all others Rather, all genuine religious paths are facets of God's pure love and light, deserving tolerance and understanding See *Hinduism*

**Hindu cosmology** See *loka*, *three worlds*

**Hinduism** (Hindu Dharma) हिन्दुधर्म India's indigenous religious and cultural system, followed today by nearly one billion adherents, mostly in India, but with large populations in many other countries Also called *Sanātana Dharma*, "eternal religion" and *Vaidika Dharma*, "religion of the *Vedas*" Hinduism is the world's most ancient religion and encompasses a broad spectrum of philosophies ranging from pluralistic theism to absolute monism It is a family of myriad faiths with four primary denominations Śaivism, Vaiṣṇavism, Śāktism and Smārtism These four hold such divergent

beliefs that each is a complete and independent religion. Yet, they share a vast heritage of culture and belief—*karma*, *dharma*, reincarnation, all-pervasive Divinity, temple worship, sacraments, manifold Deities, the *guru-śishya* tradition and a reliance on the *Vedas* as scriptural authority. From the rich soil of Hinduism long ago sprang various other traditions. Among these were Jainism, Buddhism and Sikhism, which rejected the *Vedas* and thus emerged as completely distinct religions, disassociated from Hinduism, while still sharing many philosophical insights and cultural values with their parent faith.

Though the genesis of the term is controversial, the consensus is that the term *Hindu* or *Indu* was used by the Persians to refer to the Indian peoples of the Indus Valley as early as 500 BCE. Additionally, Indian scholars point to the appearance of the related term *Sindhu* in the ancient *Rig Veda Samhitā*.

Janaki Abhisheki writes (*Religion as Knowledge. The Hindu Concept*, p. 1) "Whereas today the word *Hindu* connotes a particular faith and culture, in ancient times it was used to describe those belonging to a particular region. About 500 BCE we find the Persians referring to 'Hapta Hindu.' This referred to the region of Northwest India and the Punjab (before partition). The *Rig Veda* (the most ancient literature of the Hindus) uses the word *Sapta Sindhu* singly or in plural at least 200 times. *Sindhu* is the River Indus. Panini, the great Sanskrit grammarian, also uses the word *Sindhu* to denote the country or region. While the Persians substituted *h* for *s*, the Greeks removed the *h* also and pronounced the word as 'Indoi.' *Indian* is derived from the Greek *Indoi*."

Dr. S. Rādhākṛṣṇan similarly observed, "The Hindu civilization is so called since its original founders or earliest followers occupied the territory drained by the *Sindhu* (the Indus) River system corresponding to the Northwest Frontier Province and the Punjab. This is recorded in the *Rig Veda*, the oldest of the *Vedas*, the Hindu scriptures, which give their name to this period of Indian history. The people on the Indian side of the *Sindhu* were called Hindus by the Persians and the later Western invaders. That is the genesis of the word *Hindu*" (*The Hindu View of Life*, p. 12). See: *Hindu*. **Hindu solidarity** Hindu unity in diversity. A major theme in contemporary Hinduism according to which the various Hindu denominations are mutually supportive and work together in harmony, while taking care not to obscure or lessen their distinctions or unique virtues. The underlying belief is that Hinduism will be strong if each of its sects, denominations and lineages is individually vibrant. See: *Hinduism*.

**Hsuen Tsang** Chinese pilgrim who toured India about 630. The diary of his remarkable travels is a rare and colorful source of information about the India of his day.

**hoard**. To get and store away things such as money, goods, usually secretly.

**holy feet**. The feet of God, a God, *satguru* or any holy person, often repre-

sented by sacred sandals, called *śrī pādukā* in Sanskrit and *tiruvadī* in Tamil. The feet of a divine one are considered especially precious as they represent the point of contact of the Divine and the physical, and are thus revered as the source of grace. The sandals or feet of the *guru* are the object of worship on his *jayantī* (birthday), on *Guru Pūrnimā* and other special occasions. See *pādapūjā*, *pādukā*, *satguru*

**holy orders** A divine ordination or covenant, giving religious authority. Vows that members of a religious body make, especially a monastic body or order, such as the vows (holy orders of renunciation) given a *sannyāsin* at the time of his initiation (*sannyāsa dīkshā*), which establish a covenant with the ancient holy order of *sannyāsa*. *Sannyāsins*, the wearers of the ochre robe, are the ordained religious leaders of Hinduism. See *sannyāsa dīkshā*

**homa** होम "Fire-offering" A sacred ceremony in which the Gods are offered oblations through the medium of fire in a sanctified fire pit, *homakunda*, usually made of earthen bricks. *Homa* rites are enjoined in the *Vedas*, *Āgamas* and *Dharma* and *Grihya Śāstras*. Many domestic rites are occasions for *homa*, including *upanayana* and *vivāha*. Major *pūjās* in temples are often preceded by a *homa*. See *agni*, *havana*, *yajña*

**homosexual** Of or characterized by sexual attraction for members of one's own gender. A modern synonym is *gay*, especially for males, while female homosexuals are termed *lesbian*. See *bisexual*, *gay*, *heterosexual*, *sexuality*

**hrī** ह्री "Remorse, modesty" See *yama-niyama*.

**hued** Having specific color

**human dharma** The natural growth and expression through four stages of life. Known as *āśrama dharma*. See *āśrama dharma*, *dharma*

**humors** (or bodily humors) See *āyurveda*, *bodily humor*, *dosha*



**icchā śakti** इच्छाशक्ति "Desire, will" See *Śakti*, *trīśūla*.

**icon** A sacred image, usually of God or a God. English for *mūrti*. See *aniconic*, *mūrti*

**iconoclastic** Opposed to widely accepted ideas, beliefs and customs. Also [but not used as such in this text], opposed to the worship or use of religious icons, or advocating their destruction

**idā nāḍī** इडानाडी "Soothing channel" The feminine psychic current flowing along the spine. See *kundalinī*, *nāḍī*, *oḍic*, *pingalā*.

**illusion** (illusory) A belief, opinion or observation that appears to be, but is not in accord with the facts, truth or true values, such as the illusion created by a magician. See *avidyā*

**illustrious** Very luminous or bright, distinguished, famous, outstanding

**immanent** Indwelling, present and operating within. Relating to God, the term *immanent* means present in all things and throughout the universe, not aloof or distant. Not to be confused with *imminent*, about to happen,

- emanate*, to issue from, *eminent*, high in rank
- immature** Not ripe, not fully grown, undeveloped Still young —**immature soul**. See *ātman, evolution of the soul, soul*.
- immemorial** (from time **immemorial**). From a time so distant that it extends beyond history or human memory
- immutable** Never changing or varying See *Absolute Reality, relative*
- impasse**. A dead end, a passage with no escape. A difficulty with no solution
- impede** To obstruct or delay something, make difficult to accomplish (Noun form *impediment*)
- impediment** “That which holds the feet” Hindrance, obstacle Anything that inhibits or slows progress
- impending** That which is about to happen, threatening
- imperishable** That which cannot die or decay, indestructible, immortal With capital *I*, *imperishable* refers to God—the Eternal, Beginningless and Endless
- impermanence** The quality of being temporary and nonlasting
- impersonal** Not personal, not connected to any person
- impersonal being** One’s innermost nature, at the level of the soul’s essence, where one is not distinguished as an individual, nor as separate from God or any part of existence The soul’s essential being—Satchidānanda and Paraśiva See. *ātman, essence, evolution of the soul, soul*
- impersonal God** God in His perfections of Pure Consciousness (Parāśakti) and Absolute Reality beyond all attributes (Paraśiva) wherein He is not a person (Whereas, in His third perfection, Paramēśvara, Śiva is someone, has a body and performs actions, has will, dances, etc.)
- impetus** Anything that stimulates activity Driving force, motive, incentive
- implore**. To ask or beg for earnestly
- impoverished**. Poor, reduced to a condition of severe deprivation
- inanimate** See *animate-inanimate*
- inauspicious** Not favorable Not a good time to perform certain actions or undertake projects Ill-omened See *auspiciousness, muhūrta*
- incandescent** Glowing with heat, white-hot Radiant, luminous, very bright
- incantation** *Mantraprayoga*. The chanting of prayers, verses or formulas for magical or mystical purposes Also refers to such chants (*mantra*) *Vaśa-kriyā* is the subduing or bewitching by charms, incantation or drugs Incantation for malevolent purposes (black magic) is called *abhichāra* See *mantra*.
- incarnation** From *incarnate*, “to be made flesh” The soul’s taking on a human body —**divine incarnation** The concept of *avatāra*. The Supreme Being’s (or other Mahādeva’s) taking of human birth, generally to reestablish *dharma* This doctrine is important to several Hindu sects, notably Vaishnavism, but not held by most Śaivites See *avatāra, Vaishnavism*
- incense**. *Dhūpa*. Substance that gives off pleasant aromas when burned, usu-

- ally made from natural substances such as tree resin. A central element in Hindu worship rites, waved gently before the Deity as an offering, especially after ablution. Hindi terms include *sugandhi* and *lobāna*. A popular term for stick incense is *agarbatti* (Gujarati). See *pūjā*.
- incisive** "Cutting into." Sharp or keen, such as a penetrating and discriminating mind. See *discrimination*.
- incognito** Without being recognized, keeping one's true identity unrevealed or disguised.
- increment**. An amount of increase, usually small and followed by others, a measure of growth or change.
- individual soul**. A term used to describe the soul's nature as a unique entity, emanated by God Śiva (the Primal Soul), as a being which is evolving and not yet one with God. See *ātman*, *essence*, *kośa*, *Parameśvara*, *soul*.
- individuality**. Quality that makes one person or soul other than, or different from, another. See *ahamkāra*, *ego*, *ānava*, *soul*.
- indomitable**. Not easily discouraged, defeated or subdued. Unconquerable.
- Indra** इन्द्र "Ruler." Vedic God of rain and thunder, warrior king of the *devas*.
- indriya** इन्द्रिय "Agent, sense organ." The five agents of perception (*jñānendriyas*), hearing (*śrotra*), touch (*tvak*), sight (*chakshus*), taste (*rasana*) and smell (*ghrāṇa*), and the five agents of action (*karmendriyas*), speech (*vāk*), grasping, by means of the hands (*pāni*), movement (*pāda*), excretion (*pāyu*) and generation (*upastha*). See *kośa*, *soul*, *tattva*.
- induce**. To bring about, cause, persuade.
- Indus Valley**. Region of the Indus River, now in Pakistan, where in 1924 archeologists discovered the remains of a high civilization which flourished between 5000 and 1000 BCE. There, a "seal" was found with the effigy of Śiva as Paśupati, "lord of animals," seated in a *yogic* posture. Neither the language of these people nor their exact background is known. They related culturally and carried on an extensive trade with peoples of other civilizations, far to the West, using sturdy ships that they built themselves. For centuries they were the most advanced civilization on earth. See *Śaivism*.
- indwell**. To dwell or be in. "The priest asks the Deity to indwell the image," or come and inhabit the *mūrti* as a temporary physical body. See *mūrti*.
- I-ness**. The conceiving of oneself as an "I," or ego, which Hinduism considers a state to be transcended. See *ahamkāra*, *ānava*, *mind (individual)*.
- inexhaustible**. Cannot be exhausted, used up or emptied. Tireless.
- inexplicable**. Beyond explaining or accounting for.
- inextricable**. Cannot be disentangled or separated from another thing.
- infatuation**. The magnetic condition of being captured by a foolish or shallow love or affection.
- infinitesimal**. Infinitely small, too small to be measured.
- inflict**. To give or cause pain, wounds, etc.
- infuse**. To transmit a quality, idea, knowledge, etc., as if by pouring. To im-

part, fill or inspire

**ingest:** To take food, medicine, etc., into the body by swallowing or absorbing  
**inherent (to inhere in)** Inborn Existing in someone or something as an essential or inseparable quality —**inherent sin** See *sin*

**inherit.** To receive from an ancestor, as property, title, etc. —or to reap from our own actions “ seed *karmas* we inherit from this and past lives”

**initiation (to initiate)** To enter into, to admit as a member In Hinduism, initiation from a qualified preceptor is considered invaluable for spiritual progress See *dikshā, śaktipāta, sannyāsa dikshā*.

**injunction** An urging, an order or firm instruction

**inmost.** Located deepest within

**innate.** Naturally occurring, not acquired That which belongs to the inherent nature or constitution of a being or thing

**inner (innermost)** Located within Of the depths of our being —**inner advancement (or unfoldment)** Progress of an individual at the soul level rather than in external life —**inner bodies** The subtle bodies of man within the physical body —**inner discovery:** Learning from inside oneself, experiential revelation, one of the benefits of inner life —**inner form (or nature) of the guru:** The deeper levels of the *guru's* being that the disciple strives to attune himself to and emulate —**inner law** The principles or mechanism underlying every action or experience, often hidden *Karma* is one such law —**inner life.** The life we live inside ourselves, at the emotional, mental and spiritual levels, as distinguished from outer life —**inner light.** A moonlight-like glow that can be seen inside the head or throughout the body when the *vr̥ttis*, mental fluctuations, have been sufficiently quieted To be able to see and bask in the inner light is a milestone on the path See *vr̥tti* —**inner mind** The mind in its deeper, intuitive functions and capacities—the subsuperconscious and superconscious —**innermost body** The soul body —**inner planes** Inner worlds or regions of existence —**inner self.** The real, deep Self, the essence of the soul, rather than the outer self with which we usually identify —**inner sky.** The area of the mind which is clear inner space, free of mental images, feelings, identifications, etc. Tranquility itself The superconscious mind, Satchidānanda See *ākāśa*. —**inner truth.** Truth of a higher order —**inner universes (or worlds)** The astral and causal worlds See *kośa*.

**innumerable** So many as to be beyond counting

**inscrutable.** That cannot be analyzed or understood Mysterious, beyond examining

**insignia.** Sign or symbol of identity, rank or office, such as a badge or emblem

**instinctive** “Natural or innate” From the Latin *instinctus*, “to impel, instigate” The drives and impulses that order the animal world and the physical and lower *astral* aspects of humans—for example, self-preservation, procreation, hunger and thirst, as well as the emotions of greed, hatred,



**Īśa Upaniṣhad** ईश उपनिषद् Last of the 40 chapters of *Vājasaneyi Samhitā* of the *Yajur Veda*. A short, highly mystical scripture See *Upaniṣhad*

**Īṣṭa Devatā** इष्टदेवता "Cherished or chosen Deity" The Deity that is the object of one's special pious attention *Īṣṭa Devatā* is a concept common to all Hindu sects Vaishnavas may choose among many Divine forms, most commonly Vishnu, Bālāji, Kṛishna, Rādhā, Rāma, Lakshmi, Hanumān and Narasinha, as well as the aniconic *śālagrāma*, a sacred river rock Traditionally, Smārtas choose from among six Deities Śiva, Śakti, Vishnu, Sūrya, Ganeśa and Kumāra (or any of their traditional forms) For Śaktas, the Divine is worshiped as the Goddess, *Śakti*, in Her many fierce forms and benign forms, invoking the furious power of Kālī or Durgā, or the comforting grace of Pārvatī, Ambikā and others Śaivites direct their worship primarily to Śiva as represented by the aniconic Śiva Linga, and the human-like *mūrtis*, Natarāja and Ardhanārīśvara In temples and scriptural lore, Śiva is venerated in a multitude of forms, including the following 23 additional anthropomorphic images Somāskanda, Rishabarudra, Kalyāna-sundara, Chandrasekhara, Bhikshātana, Kāmadahanamūrti, Kālārī, Jalandara, Tripurārī, Gajarī, Virabhadra, Dakṣināmūrti, Kīratāmūrti, Nilakanṭha, Kankāla, Chakradāna, Gajamukhānugraha, Chandeseānugraha, Eka-pāda, Lūngodbhava, Sukhāsana, Umā Maheśvara and Haryardha See *mūrti*, *Śakti*, *Śiva*

**Īṣṭalinga** इष्टलिङ्ग "Cherished, chosen or personal mark of God" (*Īṣṭa* "sought, desired") For Vira Śaivites it is the personal Śivalinga, ceremonially given by a priest shortly after birth, and worn on a chain or cord around the neck thereafter See *Śivalinga*, *Vira Śaivism*

**Islam** The religion founded by Prophet Muhammed in Arabia about 625 CE Islam connotes submission to Allah, the name for God in this religion Adherents, known as Moslems, follow the "five pillars" found in their scripture, the *Koran* faith in Allah, praying five times daily facing Mecca, giving of alms, fasting during the month of Ramadan, and pilgrimage One of the fastest growing religions, Islam has over one billion followers, mostly in the Middle East, Pakistan, Africa, China, Indochina, Russia and neighboring countries See *Koran*, *Mohammed*.

**issue forth** To come out, be created To start existing as an entity E.g., creation issues forth from Natarāja's drum See *emanation*, *Natarāja*, *tattva*.

**Īśvara**. ईश्वर "Highest Lord" Supreme or Personal God See *Paramēśvara*

**Īśvarapūjana** ईश्वरपूजन "Worship" See *yama-niyama*.

**Itihāsa** इतिहास "So it was" Epic history, particularly the *Rāmāyana* and *Mahābhārata* (of which the famed *Bhagavad Gītā* is a part) This term sometimes refers to the *Purānas*, especially the *Skānda Purāna* and the *Bhāgavata Purāna* (or *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*) See *Mahābhārata*, *Rāmāyana*, *Smṛiti*.

**itinerant**. Traveling from place to place, with no permanent home Wandering See *monk*, *sādhu*, *varāṅgi*





**Jābāla Upanishad** जाबाल उपनिषद् Belongs to the *Atharva Veda*. This short scripture teaches of knowledge attained in renunciation. See *Upanishad*.

**Jagadāchārya** जगदाचार्य "World teacher." In 1986 the World Religious Parliament of New Delhi named five world leaders who were most active in spreading *Sāntana Dharma* outside India. The five are: H. H. Swāmī

Chinmayananda of Chinmaya Missions, India, Satguru Sivaya Subramuniyaswami of Śaiva Siddhānta Church and Himalayan Academy, USA, Yogirāj Amrit Desai of Kripālū Yoga Center, USA, Pandit Tej Rāmji Sharma of Nepālī Baba, Nepal, and Swāmī Jagpurnadās Mahārāj, Mauritius.

**Jaimini** जैमिनि Founder of the *Mīmāṃsā Darśana*. See *śāstra darśana*.

**Jaiminīya Brāhmana Upanishad** जैमिनीय ब्राह्मण उपनिषद् A philosophical discourse of the *Sāma Veda* dealing with death, passage to other worlds and reincarnation. See *Upanishad*.

**Jainism** (Jaina) जैन An ancient non-Vedic religion of India made prominent by the teachings of Mahāvīra ("great hero"), ca 500 BCE. The Jain Āgamas teach reverence for all life, vegetarianism and strict renunciation for ascetics. Jains focus great emphasis on the fact that all souls may attain liberation, each by his own effort. Their worship is directed toward their great historic saints, called Tīrthankaras ("ford-crossers"), of whom Mahāvīra was the 24th and last. Jains number about six million today, living mostly in India. See *Mahāvīra*.

**Janaloka** जनलोक "Plane of creativity, or of liberated mortals." The third highest of the seven upper worlds, realm of *visuddha chakra*. See *loka*.

**jangama** जङ्गम "Moving, wanderer." A term used by Vira Śaivites, originally to name their mendicant, renunciates who walked as homeless *sādhus*, uplifting others. Now an order of Vira Śaivite teachers. See *Vira Śaivism*.

**japa** जप "Recitation." Practice of concentratedly repeating a *mantra*, often while counting the repetitions on a *mālā* or strand of beads. It may be done silently or aloud. Sometimes known as *mantra yoga*. A major *sādhana* in Hindu spiritual practice, from the simple utterance of a few names of God to extraordinary feats of repeating sacred syllables millions of times for years on end. It is recommended as a cure for pride and arrogance, anger and jealousy, fear and confusion. It harmonizes the *doṣhas* and quiets the *vr̥ttis*. Filling the mind with divine syllables, awakening the divine essence of spiritual energies in the physical body, *japa* brings forth the *amṛta*. For Śaivites, *Namah Śivāya* in its various forms is the most treasured *mantra* used in *japa*. The *mantra* Hare-Rāma-Hare-Kṛṣṇa is among the foremost Vaishnava *mantras*. *Japa yoga* is said to be of 14 kinds: daily (*nitya*), circumstantial (*naimittika*), the *japa* of desired results (*kāmya*), forbidden (*nishiddha*), penitential (*prāyaścitta*), unmoving (*achala*), moving (*chala*), voiced (*vāchika*), whispered (*upāṅśu*), bee, or murmured (*bhramara*),

- mental (*mānasa*), uninterrupted (*akhandā*), nonuttered (*ajapa*) and circumambulatory (*pradakṣiṇa*) See *aṃṛita*, *mantra*, *yama-niyama*, *yoga*.
- jātakarma*. जातकर्म "Rite of birth" See *samskāras of birth*
- jāti*. जाति "Birth, genus, community or caste" See *varna dharma*
- jayantī* जयन्ती "Birthday" See *Guru Jayantī*
- jīva* जीव "Living, existing" From *jīv*, "to live" The individual soul, *ātman*, during its embodied state, bound by the three *malas* (*ānava*, *karma* and *māyā*) The *jīvanmukta* is one who is "liberated while living" See *ātman*, *evolution of the soul*, *jīvanmukta*, *puruṣa*, *soul*
- jīvanmukta* जीवन्मुक्त "Liberated soul" A being who has attained *nirvikalpa samādhi*—the realization of the Self, Paraśiva—and is liberated from re-birth while living in a human body (Contrasted with *videhamukta*, one liberated at the point of death) This attainment is the culmination of lifetimes of intense striving, *sādhana* and *tapas*, requiring total renunciation, *sannyāsa* (death to the external world, denoted in the conducting of one's own funeral rites), in the current incarnation While completing life in the physical body, the *jīvanmukta* enjoys the ability to reenter *nirvikalpa samādhi* again and again At this time, *siddhis* can be developed which are carried to the inner worlds after *mahāsamādhi* Such an awakened *jñāni* benefits the population by simply being who he is When he speaks, he does so without forethought His wisdom is beyond reason, yet it does not conflict with reason Nor does he arrive at what he says through the process of reason, but through the process of *ājñā-chakra* sight See *jīvanmukti*, *jñāna*, *kāvalya*, *moksha*, *Self Realization*, *Śivasāyujya*, *videhamukti*
- jīvanmukti* जीवन्मुक्ति "Liberation while living" The state of the *jīvanmukta*. Contrasted with *videhamukti*, liberation at the point of death See *death*, *jīvanmukta*, *moksha*, *reincarnation*, *videhamukti*
- jīvayajña*. जीवयज्ञ "Self sacrifice" See *yajña*.
- jñāna* ज्ञान "Knowledge, wisdom" The matured state of the soul It is the wisdom that comes as an aftermath of the *kundalinī* breaking through the door of *Brahman* into the realization of Paraśiva, Absolute Reality The repeated *samādhis* of Paraśiva ever deepen this flow of divine knowing which establishes the knower in an extraordinary point of reference, totally different from those who have not attained this enlightenment *Jñāna* is the awakened, superconscious state (*kāraṇa chitta*) working within the ordinary experience of the world, flowing into daily life situations It is the fruition of the progressive stages of *charyā*, *kriyā* and *yoga* in the Śaiva Siddhānta system of spiritual unfoldment *Jñāna* is sometimes misunderstood as book knowledge, as a maturity or awakening that comes from simply understanding a complex philosophical system or systems Those who define *jñāna* in this way deny that the path is a progression of *charyā-kriyā-yoga-jñāna* or of *karma-bhakti-rāja-jñāna*. Rather, they say that one can choose his or her path, and that each leads to the ultimate goal See *God Realiza-*

tion, door of Brahman, Self Realization, *samādhi*

*Jñānāmṛta* ज्ञानामृत A treatise of poems by Gorakshanātha on the duties of a *yogī* See *Gorakshanātha*.

*jñāna pāda* ज्ञानपाद "Stage of wisdom" According to the Śaiva Siddhānta *riṣhis*, *jñāna* is the last of the four successive *pādas* (stages) of spiritual unfoldment. It is the culmination of the third stage, the *yoga pāda*. Also names the knowledge section of each *Āgama* See *jñāna, pāda*.

*jñāna śakti* ज्ञानशक्ति "Power of wisdom" One of Śiva's three primary *śaktis*. Also a name for Lord Kārttikeya's *vel* See *Kārttikeya, śakti, trisūla*.

*jñāna yoga*. ज्ञानयोग "Union of knowledge" Describes the esoteric spiritual practices of the fully enlightened being, or *jñānī* An alternative meaning, popularized by Swāmī Vivekānanda, is the quest for cognition through intellectual religious study, as one of four alternate paths to truth, the other three being *bhakti yoga*, *karma yoga* and *rāja yoga*. See *jñāna, yoga*.

*Jñāneśvarī* ज्ञानेश्वरी Foremost religious treatise in the Marāṭhi language Written by the Nātha saint Jñāneśvar (or Jñānadeva) about 1290 It is a verse-by-verse commentary on the *Bhagavad Gītā*

*jñānī*. ज्ञानी "Sage" One who possesses *jñāna* See *jīvanmukta, jñāna*.

*joint family* कुटुम्बा or *kula* The Hindu social unit consisting of several generations of kindred living together under the same roof or in a joining compound Traditionally, joint families live in a large single home, but in modern times accommodations are often in individual, nuclear homes within a shared compound The joint family includes the father and mother, sons, grandsons and great-grandsons with their spouses, as well as the daughters, granddaughters and great-granddaughters until they are married—thus often comprising several married couples and their children The head of the joint family, called *kuṭumba mukhya* (also *mukhya* or *karṭṛī*), is the father, supported by the mother, and in his absence, the elder son, guided by his mother and supported by his spouse From an early age, the eldest son is given special training by his father to assume this future responsibility as head of the family In the event of the father's death, sacred law does allow for the splitting of the family wealth between the sons Division of family assets may also be necessary in cases where sons are involved in different professions and live in different towns, when there is an inability for all to get along under one roof, or when the family becomes unmanageably large

The main characteristics of the joint family are that its members 1) share a common residence, 2) partake of food prepared in the same kitchen, 3) hold their property in common and, 4) ideally, profess the same religion, sect and *sampradāya* Each individual family of husband, wife and children is under the guidance of the head of the joint family All work together unselfishly to further the common good Each joint family extends out from its home to include a second level of connections as an "extended family

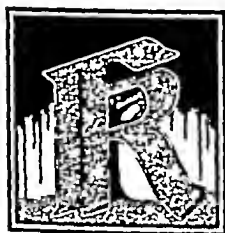
(*bṛihatkuṭumba* or *mahākuṭumba*)” See *extended family*, *gṛihastha dharma juncture* A critical point in the development of events

**gyotisha** ज्योतिष From *gyoti*, “light” “The science of the lights (or stars)”

Hindu astrology, the knowledge and practice of analyzing events and circumstances, delineating character and determining auspicious moments, according to the positions and movements of heavenly bodies In calculating horoscopes, *gyotisha* uses the sidereal (fixed-star) system, whereas Western astrology uses the tropical (fixed-date) method

**gyotisha śāstri** ज्योतिषशास्त्री “Astrologer” A person well versed in the science of *gyotisha* See *gyotisha*

**Jyotisha Vedāṅga** ज्योतिषवेदाङ्ग “Veda-limb of celestial science (astronomy-astrology)” Ancient texts giving knowledge of astronomy and astrology, for understanding the cosmos and determining proper timing for Vedic rites (*Jyoti* means light [of the sun, fire, etc.]) See *gyotisha*, *Vedāṅga*



**Kadaitswāmī** கடையிறகுவாமி “Marketplace *swāmī*”

A *satguru* of the Nandinātha Sampradāya’s Kailāsa Paramparā Born ca 1820, died 1875 Renouncing his career as a judge in Bangalore, South India, Kadaitswāmī became a *sannyāsīn* and trained under the “Rishi from the Himālayas,” who then sent him on mission to Sri Lanka He performed severe *tapas* on an island off the coast

of Jaffna, awakening many *siddhis* For decades he spurred the Sri Lankan Śaivites to greater spirituality through his inspired talks and demonstration of *siddhis* He initiated Chellappaswāmī as the next *satguru* in the *paramparā* Kadaitswāmī’s name given at his initiation was Muthyānandaswāmī See *Kailāsa Paramparā*, *Nātha Sampradāya*.

**Kadavul.** கடவுள் “Beyond and within” An ancient Tamil name for Lord Śiva meaning, “He who is both immanent and transcendent, within and beyond” See *Śiva*

**Kailāsa.** कैलास “Crystalline” or “abode of bliss” The four-faced Himalayan peak in Western Tibet, the earthly abode of Lord Śiva Associated with Mount Meru, the legendary center of the universe, it is an important pilgrimage destination for all Hindus, as well as for Tibetan Buddhists Kailāsa is represented in Śāktism by a certain three-dimensional form of the *Śrī Chakra yantra* (also called *kailāsa chakra*) See *Śrī Chakra*

**Kailāsa Paramparā** कैलासपरंपरा A spiritual lineage of *siddhas*, a major stream of the Nandinātha Sampradāya, proponents of the ancient philosophy of monistic Śaiva Siddhānta The first of these masters that history recalls was Maharishi Nandinātha (or Nandikeśvara) 2,250 years ago, *satguru* to the great Tirumular, ca 200 BCE, and seven other disciples (as stated in the *Tirumantiram*) Patañjali, Vyāghrapāda, Sanatkumāra, Śivayogamuni, Sanakar, Sanadanar and Sananthanar Tirumular had seven disciples

Malangam, Indiran, Soman, Brahman, Rudran, Kalanga, and Kañjamalaya, each of whom established one or more monasteries and propagated the Āgamic lore. In the line of Kalanga came the sages Rīghama, Māli-gaideva, Nādāntar, Bhogadeva and Paramānanda. The lineage continued down the centuries and is alive today—the first recent *siddha* known being the Rishi from the Himalayas, so named because he descended from those holy mountains. In South India, he initiated Kadaiṣwāmī (ca 1810–1875), who in turn initiated Chellappaswāmī (1840–1915). Chellappan passed the mantle of authority to sage Yogaswāmī (1872–1964), who in 1949 initiated the current *satguru*, Śivaya Subramuniyaswami. See *Chellappaswāmī, Kadaiṣwāmī, Nātha Sampradāya, Patañjali, Subramuniyaswami, Tirumular, Vyāghrapāda, Yogaswāmī*.

**kaivalya** कैवल्य “Absolute oneness, aloneness, perfect detachment, freedom.” Liberation. *Kaivalya* is the term used by Patañjali and others in the *yoga* tradition to name the goal and fulfillment of *yoga*, the state of complete detachment from transmigration. It is virtually synonymous with *moksha*. *Kaivalya* is the perfectly transcendent state, the highest condition resulting from the ultimate realization. It is defined uniquely according to each philosophical school, depending on its beliefs regarding the nature of the soul. See *moksha, samarasa, Śivasāyujya, jñāna*.

**Kaivalya Upaniṣad** कैवल्य उपनिषद् A philosophical text of the *Atharva Veda*. This treatise teaches how to reach Śiva through meditation.

**kāla** काल 1) “Time, to calculate.” 2) “Black, of a black or dark blue color, death.”

**kalā** कला “Part, segment, art or skill.” 1) Cultural arts. (See *kalā*–64) 2) A five-fold division of the cosmos based on the 36 *tattvas*, as explained in the *Saiva Āgamas*. The five *kalās*—spheres, or dimensions of consciousness—are 1) Śāntyatītakalā, “sphere beyond peace,” the extremely rarified level of *śuddha māyā* (actinic energy) in which superconsciousness is expanded into endless inner space, the realm of God Śiva and the Gods, 2) Śāntikalā, “sphere of peace,” the level within *śuddha māyā* where forms are made of inner sounds and colors, where reside great *devas* and *ṛishis* who are beyond the reincarnation cycles, 3) Vidyākalā, “sphere of knowing,” the level within *śuddhāśuddha māyā* (actinodic energy) of subsuperconscious awareness of forms in their totality in progressive states of manifestation, and of the interrelated forces of the actinodic energies, 4) Pratishṭhākalā, “sphere of resting, tranquility,” the level within *asuddha māyā* (odic energy) of intellect and instinct, 5) Nivṛittikalā, “sphere of perdition, destruction, returning,” the level within *asuddha māyā* of physical and near-physical existence, conscious, subconscious and sub-subconscious mind. See *tattva*.

**kalā**–64 (*chatuḥ shashṭi kalā*) चतु षष्टिकला “Sixty-four arts.” A classical curriculum of sacred sciences, studies, arts and skills of cultured living listed in various Hindu *śāstras*. Its most well-known appearance is in the

*Kāma Sūtra*, an extensive manual devoted to sensual pleasures. The *Kāma Sūtra* details as its primary subject matter the 64 secret arts, *abhyantara kalā*, of erotic love. In addition to these it lists 64 *bāhya kalās*, or practical arts, as required study for cultured persons. They are 1) singing, 2) instrumental music, 3) dancing, 4) painting, 5) forehead adornments, 6) making decorative floral and grain designs on the floor, 7) home and temple flower arranging, 8) personal grooming, 9) mosaic tiling, 10) bedroom arrangements, 11) creating music with water, 12) splashing and squirting with water, 13) secret *mantras*, 14) making flower garlands, 15) head adornments, 16) dressing, 17) costume decorations, 18) perfumery, 19) jewelry making, 20) magic and illusions, 21) ointments for charm and virility, 22) manual dexterity, 23) skills of cooking, eating and drinking, 24) beverage and dessert preparation, 25) sewing (making and mending garments), 26) embroidery, 27) playing *vīna* and drum, 28) riddles and rhymes, 29) poetry games, 30) tongue twisters and difficult recitation, 31) literary recitation, 32) drama and story telling, 33) verse composition game, 34) furniture caning, 35) erotic devices and knowledge of sexual arts, 36) crafting wooden furniture, 37) architecture and house construction, 38) distinguishing between ordinary and precious stones and metals, 39) metal-working, 40) gems and mining, 41) gardening and horticulture, 42) games of wager involving animals, 43) training parrots and mynas to speak, 44) hairdressing, 45) coding messages, 46) speaking in code, 47) knowledge of foreign languages and dialects, 48) making flower carriages, 49) spells, charms and omens, 50) making simple mechanical devices, 51) memory training, 52) game of reciting verses from hearing, 53) decoding messages, 54) the meanings of words, 55) dictionary studies, 56) prosody and rhetoric, 57) impersonation, 58) artful dressing, 59) games of dice, 60) the game of *akasha* (a dice game played on a board), 61) making dolls and toys for children, 62) personal etiquette and animal training, 63) knowledge of *dharmic* warfare and victory, and 64) physical culture.

These are among the skills traditionally taught to both genders, while emphasizing masculinity in men and femininity in women. Their subject matter draws on such texts as the *Vedāngas* and *Upavedas*, and the *Śilpa Śāstras*, or craft manuals. Through the centuries, writers have prescribed many more skills and accomplishments. These include sculpture, pottery, weaving, astronomy and astrology, mathematics, weights and measures, philosophy, scriptural study, agriculture, navigation, trade and shipping, knowledge of time, logic, psychology and *āyurveda*. In modern times, two unique sets of 64 *kalās* have been developed, one for girls and one for boys. See *hereditary, Śilpa Śāstra*.

**Kālāmukha** कालामुख "Black-faced" (probably for a black mark of renunciation worn on the forehead). A Śaiva sect issued from Pāśupata Śaivism at its height (ca 600–1000). As no Kālāmukha religious texts exist today, this

sect is known only indirectly. They were said to be well organized in temple construction and worship, as well as eccentric and unsocial, eating from human skulls, smearing their bodies with ashes from the cremation ground, carrying a club, wearing matted hair, etc. See *left-handed, Pāśupata Śaivism, Tantrism*

**kalāśa.** कलश “Water pot, pitcher, jar” In temple rites, a pot of water, *kalāśa*, topped with mango leaves and a husked coconut represents the Deity during special *pūjās*. *Kalāśa* also names the pot-like spires that adorn temple roofs.

**Kālī.** काली “Black” Goddess. A form of Śakti in Her fierce aspect worshiped by various sects within Śāktism. She is dark, nude, primordial and fiercely powerful, as of a naked energy untamed. But from the perspective of devotees, She is the incomparable protectress, champion of *sādhana* and mother of liberation. The Goddess Durgā, seated on a tiger, has similar characteristics and is often identified with Kālī. See *Śakti, Śāktism*

**Kali Yuga** कलियुग “Dark Age” The Kali Yuga is the last age in the repetitive cycle of four phases of time the universe passes through. It is comparable to the darkest part of the night, as the forces of ignorance are in full power and many of the subtle faculties of the soul are obscured. See *cosmic cycle, mahāpralaya, yuga*

**Kallaṭa** कल्लट An exponent of Kashmir Śaivism (ca 875) who wrote the *Spanda Kārikās*. Kallaṭa was a disciple of Vasugupta. See *Kashmīr Śaivism*

**kalpa** कल्प From *kṛp*, “arranged, ordered” 1) Rules for ceremony or sacred living, as in the *Kalpa Vedāṅga*. 2) Determination or resolve, as in *sankalpa*. 3) A vast period of time also known as a day of *Brahmā*, equaling 1,000 *mahāyugas*, or 4,320,000,000 years. See *cosmic cycle, Kalpa Vedāṅga, sankalpa, yuga*

**Kalpa Vedāṅga** कल्पवेदाङ्ग “Procedural or ceremonial Veda-limb” Also known as the *Kalpa Sūtras*—a body of three groups of auxiliary Vedic texts: 1) the *Śrauta Sūtras* and *Sulba Sūtras*, on public Vedic rites (*yajña*), 2) the *Gṛhya Sūtras* (or *Śāstras*), on domestic rites and social custom, and 3) the *Dharma Śāstras* (or *Sūtras*), on religious law. There are numerous sets of *Kalpa Sūtras*, composed by various *ṛishis*. Each set is associated with one of the four *Vedas*. See *Dharma Śāstra, Gṛhya Sūtras, Sulba Śāstras, Śrauta Sūtras, Vedāṅgas*

**Kalyāna** कल्याण A town in Karnataka, South India

**kāma** काम “Pleasure, love, desire” Cultural, intellectual and sexual fulfillment. One of four human goals, *purushārtha*. See *Kāma Sūtras, purushārtha*

**kamandalu** कमण्डलु “Vessel, water jar” Traditionally earthen or wooden, carried by *sannyāsins*, it symbolizes the renunciate’s simple, self-contained life. The tree from which *kamandalus* are traditionally made is the *kamandalutaru*. See *sannyāsa dharma, sannyāsin*

**Kāma Sūtra(s)** कामसूत्र “Aphorisms on pleasure” A fifth-century text by Vā-

- syāyana on erotics The *Kāma Sūtra* and other *Kāma Śāstras* are sometimes classed as an *Upaveda* See *Upaveda*
- Kāmika Āgama** कामिक आगम An important scripture among the 28 *Śaiva Siddhānta Āgamas*, widely available today The verses from its *kriyā pāda*, on ritual and temple construction, are a crucial reference for South Indian priests See *Śaiva Āgamas*
- Kanāda**. कणाद Founder of the *Vaiśeṣika Darśana*, author of the *Vaiśeṣika Sūtras* See *śad darśana*
- Kandar Anubhūti** கந்தா அனுபூதி A highly mystical 51-verse poem in praise of Lord Kārttikeya-Murugan composed by the Tamil saint, Arunagirināthar (ca 1500) It describes the narrator's arduous path to Ultimate Reality
- Kannada** One of four modern Dravidian languages, and principal medium for Vira Śaivism It is spoken by 20 million people, mostly in Karnataka
- Kanphaṭi** कन्फटि (Hindi) "Split eared," from the custom of splitting the cartilage of the ear to insert large earrings The name of the ascetic order of men and women founded by Gorakshanātha (ca 950), proponents of *kundalinī-haṭha yoga* still today See *earrings*, *Gorakshanātha*, *Siddha Siddhānta*
- Kāpālīka** कापालिक An ascetic sect which developed out of the *Pāśupatas* around 500 CE and largely vanished around 1400 They earned a reputation for extreme practices Possible predecessors of Gorakshanātha Siddha Siddhānta yogīs See *Pāśupata Śaivism*
- kapha** कफ "Biological water" One of the three bodily humors, called *dosha*, *kapha* is known as the water humor Principle of cohesion *Kapha* gives bodily structure and stability, lubricates, heals and bestows immunity See *āyurveda*, *dosha*
- Kapila** कपिल Founder (ca 500 BCE) of the *Sāṅkhya* philosophy, one of the six *darśanas* of Hinduism See *śad darśana*
- Kārana Āgama** कारण आगम One of the 28 *Śaiva Siddhānta Āgamas* widely available today Its *kriyā pāda* forms the basis for temple rituals performed in nearly all South Indian Śiva temples See *Śaiva Āgamas*
- kārana chitta** कारणचित्त "Causal mind" The intuitive-superconscious mind of the soul It corresponds to the *ānandamaya kośa*, bliss sheath, also called *kārana śarīra*, causal body See *kośa*, *mind (five states)*, *soul*.
- Karana Hasuge**. करणहसुगे A central Vira Śaiva scripture authored by Chennabasavanna See *Chennabasavanna*
- kārana śarīra**. कारणशरीर "Causal body," the actinic body or soul body See *actinic*, *actinodic*, *kośa*, *odic*, *soul*, *subtle body*
- Karavana Māhātmya**. करवणमाहात्म्य See *Pāśupata Śaivism*
- karma**. कर्म "Action, deed" One of the most important principles in Hindu thought, *karma* refers to 1) any act or deed, 2) the principle of cause and effect, 3) a consequence or "fruit of action" (*karmaphala*) or "after effect" (*uttaraphala*), which sooner or later returns upon the doer What we sow, we shall reap in this or future lives Selfish, hateful acts (*pāpakarma* or



*lukarma*) will bring suffering Benevolent actions (*punya**karma* or *suka**karma*) will bring loving reactions *Karma* is a neutral, self-perpetuating law of the inner cosmos, much as gravity is an impersonal law of the outer cosmos In fact, it has been said that gravity is a small, external expression of the greater law of *karma*. The impelling, unseen power of one's past actions is called *adṛiṣṭa*.

The law of *karma* acts impersonally, yet we may meaningfully interpret its results as either positive (*punya*) or negative (*pāpa*)—terms describing actions leading the soul either toward or away from the spiritual goal *Karma* is further graded as white (*śukla*), black (*kṛishna*), mixed (*śukla-kṛishna*) or neither white nor black (*aśukla-akṛishna*) The latter term describes the *karma* of the *jñānī*, who, as Rishi Patañjali says, is established in *kaivalya*, freedom from *prakṛiti* through realization of the Self Similarly, one's *karma* must be in a condition of *aśukla-akṛishna*, quiescent balance, in order for liberation to be attained This equivalence of *karma* is called *karmasāmya*, and is a factor that brings *malaparipāka*, or maturity of *ānava mala*. It is this state of resolution in preparation for *samādhi* at death that all Hindus seek through making amends and settling differences

*Karma* is threefold *sañchita*, *prārabdha* and *kriyamāna* —*sañchita karma* "Accumulated actions" The sum of all *karmas* of this life and past lives —*prārabdha karma*. "Actions begun, set in motion" That portion of *sañchita karma* that is bearing fruit and shaping the events and conditions of the current life, including the nature of one's bodies, personal tendencies and associations —*kriyamāna karma* "Being made" The *karma* being created and added to *sañchita* in this life by one's thoughts, words and actions, or in the inner worlds between lives *Kriyamāna karma* is also called *āgāmi*, "coming, arriving," and *vartamāna*, "living, set in motion" While some *kriyamāna karmas* bear fruit in the current life, others are stored for future births Each of these types can be divided into two categories *ārabdha* (literally, "begun, undertaken," *karma* that is "sprouting"), and *anārabdha* ("not commenced, dormant"), or "seed *karma*"

In a famed analogy, *karma* is compared to rice in its various stages *Sañchita karma*, the residue of one's total accumulated actions, is likened to rice that has been harvested and stored in a granary From the stored rice, a small portion has been removed, husked and readied for cooking and eating This is *prārabdha karma*, past actions that are shaping the events of the present Meanwhile, new rice, mainly from the most recent harvest of *prārabdha karma*, is being planted in the field that will yield a future crop and be added to the store of rice This is *kriyamāna karma*, the consequences of current actions

In Śaivism, *karma* is one of three principal bonds of the soul, along with *ānava* and *māyā* *Karma* is the driving force that brings the soul back again and again into human birth in the evolutionary cycle of transmigration

called *samsāra* When all earthly *karmas* are resolved and the Self has been realized, the soul is liberated from rebirth This is the goal of all Hindus

For each of the three kinds of *karma* there is a different method of resolution Nonattachment to the fruits of action, along with daily rites of worship and strict adherence to the codes of *dharma*, stops the accumulation of *kriyamāna*. *Prārabdha karma* is resolved only through being experienced and lived through *Sañchita karma*, normally inaccessible, is burned away only through the grace and *dikshā* of the *satguru*, who prescribes *sādhana* and *tapas* for the benefit of the *śishya* Through the sustained *kundalinī* heat of this extreme penance, the seeds of unsprouted *karmas* are fried, and therefore will never sprout in this or future lives See *dikshā*, *grace*.

Like the four-fold edict of *dharma*, the three-fold edict of *karma* has both individual and impersonal dimensions Personal *karma* is thus influenced by broader contexts, sometimes known as family *karma*, community *karma*, national *karma*, global *karma* and universal *karma* See *ānava*, *fate*, *māyā*, *moksha*, *pāpa*, *pāśa*, *punya*, *sin*, *soul*

*karmasāmya*. कर्मसाम्य "Balance or equipoise of *karma*" See *karma*

*karmāsaya*: कर्मशय "Holder of *karma*" Describes the body of the soul, or *ānandamaya kośa*. See *karma*, *kośa*

*karma yoga* कर्मयोग "Union through action" The path of selfless service See *yoga*.

*Karnāṭaka* कर्णाटक Southwest state of modern India, where Vijayanagara flourished Vira Śaivism is centered here Population 25 million, area 74,043 square miles

*karnavedha* कर्णवेध "Ear-piercing" See *samskāras of childhood*

*Kārttikeya*. कार्तिकेय Child of the Pleiades, from *Kṛttikā*, "Pleiades" A son of Śiva A great Mahādeva worshiped in all parts of India and the world Also known as Murugan, Kumāra, Skanda, Shanmukhanātha, Subramanya and more, He is the God who guides that part of evolution which is religion, the transformation of the instinctive into a divine wisdom through the practice of *yoga* He holds the holy *vel of jñāna śakti*, which is His Power to vanquish darkness or ignorance

*Kārttikeya Stotram* कार्तिकेयस्तोत्र A subdivision (*Rudrāyamala Tantra*) of the *Śākta Tantras* dedicated to God Kārttikeya See *Kārttikeya*.

*karunā* करुणा "Compassionate, loving, full of grace"

*Kāruna Āgama*. कारुण आगम One of the 28 *Āgamas* of Śaiva Siddhānta See *Śaiva Āgamas*

*Kārunākarak Kadavul* கருணாகரக கடவுள் Hymn by the Tamil saint, Tayumanavar (1705-1742), in praise of Lord Śiva See *Tayumanavar*

*kārunya*. कारुण्य "Compassion, kindness, love" In Śaivism, an alternate term for Śiva's revealing grace, *anugraha śakti* See *anugraha śakti*, *grace*.

*kāshāya*. काषाय "Brownish-red" The color of *sannyāsins'* robes See *kavi*.

*Kashmir (Kāśmīra)* कश्मीर The Northernmost area of India, part of the

present-day state of Jammu and Kashmir. It figures prominently in the history of Śaivism. Area 115,000 square miles, under dispute between India and Pakistan. Population is six million in the Indian sector.

**Kashmīr Śaivism** कश्मीरशैव In this mildly theistic and intensely monistic school founded by Vasugupta around 850, Śiva is immanent and transcendent. Purification and *yoga* are strongly emphasized. Kashmīr Śaivism provides an extremely rich and detailed understanding of the human psyche, and a clear and distinct path of *kundalinī-siddha yoga* to the goal of Self-Realization. The Kashmīr Śaivite is not so much concerned with worshipping a personal God as he is with attaining the transcendental state of Śiva-consciousness. *Sādhana* leads to the assimilation of the object (world) in the subject (I) until the Self (Śiva) stands revealed as one with the universe. The goal—liberation—is sustained recognition (*pratyabhijñā*) of one's true Self as nothing but Śiva. There are three *upāya*, or stages of attainment of God-consciousness: *ānavopāya* (*yoga*), *sāktopāya* (spiritual discrimination), *sāmbhavopāya* (attainment through the guru's instruction) and *anupāya*, or "no means" (spontaneous realization without effort). Kashmīr Śaivite literature is in three broad divisions: *Āgama Śāstras*, *Spanda Śāstras* and *Pratyabhijñā Śāstras*. Today various organizations promulgate the esoteric teachings. While the number of Kashmīr Śaivite formal followers is uncertain, the school remains an important influence in India. See *Śaivism*, *upāya*.

**kathā** कथा "Story, discussion." Also, the literary form involving the telling of stories. *Kathakas* are bards, storytellers. See *folk-narratives*, *mythology*.

**Kaṭha Upanishad** कठ उपनिषद् One of the major *Upanishads*, belonging to the *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa* of the *Yajur Veda*. This scripture contains the famous story of Nachiketas who extracts from Yama, Lord of Death, the knowledge of liberation to be had through realization of the Supreme.

**Kāthirgāma Purāṇa** कथिर्गमपुराण A secondary scripture regarding the famous central Sri Lankan abode of Lord Murugan (Kārttikeya).

**Kaundīnya** कौण्डिन्य Author of a commentary on the *Pāśupata Sūtras* (ca. 500). See *Pāśupata Śaivism*, *Pāśupata Sūtras*.

**Kauruṣa** कौरुष One of four known disciples of Lakulīśa. See *Lakulīśa*, *Pāśupata Śaivism*.

**Kaushītakī Upanishad** कौषीतकी उपनिषद् A major *Upanishad* belonging to the *Rig Veda*. It discusses 1) the course of souls after death, 2) the doctrine of *prāṇa* as related to the *ātman* and 3) the attainment of *moksha*.

**kavadī** കാവടി A penance offered to Lord Murugan-Kārttikeya, especially during Tai Pusam, consisting of carrying in procession a heavy, beautifully decorated, wooden object from which pots of milk hang which are to be used for His *abhisheka*. The participant's tongue and other parts of the body are often pierced with small silver spears or hooks. See *penance*.

**kavi** കാവി "Ocher-saffron color." A Tamil term referring to the color taken on by robes of *sādhus* who sit, meditate or live on the banks of the Ganges.

Names the color of the *sannyāsin's* robes The Sanskrit equivalent is *kāshāya*

**Kāyavarohana** कायवरोहण Birthplace of *Lakulīṣa*, most prominent *guru* of *Pāṣupata Śaivism*, in India's present-day state of Baroda See *Lakulīṣa*

**kāya siddhi** कायसिद्धि In *Siddha Siddhānta*, as well as *Śarva Siddhānta* and other *yoga* traditions, the process by which a *yogī* transforms his body from physical to spiritual substance to attain deathlessness See *siddhi*

**Kedāresvara Temple** केदारेश्वर A temple in Karnataka which belonged to the *Kālāmukha* sect of *Śaivism* Inscriptions upon it (1162) are a main source of knowledge about this now nearly extinct sect See *Kālāmukha*

**Kena Upanishad** केन उपनिषद् Belongs to the *Talavakāra Brāhmana* of the *Sāma Veda* It is a discourse upon Brahman, Absolute Reality and His worship as personal God See *Upanishad*

**Kerala** केरल The small Indian state, formerly called Konkan, along the southwestern tip of India Area 15,000 square miles, population 25 million

**keśānta** केशान्त "Beard-shaving" See *samskāras of adulthood*

**kindred** Family, relatives, kin See *joint family; extended family*

**kīrtana** कीर्तन "Praising" Devotional singing and dancing in celebration of God, Gods and *guru* An important form of congregational worship in many Hindu sects See *congregational worship; bhajana*

**knower** One who knows In philosophy, that within conscious beings which understands or is conscious See *awareness; jñāna; sākshin; chit*

**konrai** കണക്കര The Golden Shower tree, *Cassia fistula*, symbol of Śiva's cascading, abundant, golden grace

**Koran** The Islamic religion's sacred book, God's word transmitted through the angel Gabriel to Mohammed, the prophet of Islam Its official version appeared around 650, 18 years after Mohammed's death See *Mohammed*

**kośa** कोश "Sheath, vessel, container, layer" Philosophically, five sheaths through which the soul functions simultaneously in the various planes or levels of existence They are sometimes compared to the layers of an onion The *kośas*, in order of increasing subtlety, are as follows —*annamaya kośa*.

"Sheath composed of food" The physical or odic body, coarsest of sheaths in comparison to the faculties of the soul, yet indispensable for evolution and Self Realization, because only within it can all fourteen *chakras* fully function See *chakra* —*prānamaya kośa* "Sheath composed of *prāna* (vital force)" Also known as the *prānic* or health body, or the etheric body or etheric double, it coexists within the physical body as its source of life, breath and vitality, and is its connection with the astral body *Prāna* moves in the *prānamaya kośa* as five primary currents or *vayus*, "vital airs or winds" *Prānamaya kośa* disintegrates at death along with the physical body See *prāna* —*manomaya kośa* "Mind-formed sheath" The astral body, from *manas*, "thought, will, wish" The instinctive-intellectual sheath of ordinary thought, desire and emotion It is the seat of the *indriyas*, sensory and

motor organs, respectively called *jñānendriyas* and *karmendriyas*. The *manomaya kośa* takes form as the physical body develops and is discarded in the inner worlds before rebirth. It is understood in two layers: 1) the odic-causal sheath (*buddhi*) and 2) the odic-astral sheath (*manas*). See *indriya*, *manas* — *viññānamaya kośa* “Sheath of cognition.” The mental or cognitive-intuitive sheath, also called the actinodic sheath. It is the vehicle of higher thought, *viññāna*—understanding, knowing, direct cognition, wisdom, intuition and creativity — *ānandamaya kośa*. “Body of bliss.” The intuitive-superconscious sheath or actinic-causal body. This inmost soul form (*svarūpa*) is the ultimate foundation of all life, intelligence and higher faculties. Its essence is *Parāśakti* (Pure Consciousness) and *Paraśiva* (the Absolute). *Ānandamaya kośa* is not a sheath in the same sense as the four outer *kośas*. It is the soul itself, a body of light, also called *kāraṇa śarīra*, causal body, and *karmāśaya*, holder of *karmas* of this and all past lives. *Kāraṇa chitta*, “causal mind,” names the soul’s superconscious mind, of which *Parāśakti* (or *Satchidānanda*) is the rarified substratum. *Ānandamaya kośa* is that which evolves through all incarnations and beyond until the soul’s ultimate, fulfilled merger, *viśvagrāsa*, in the Primal Soul, *Parameśvara*. Then *ānandamaya kośa* becomes *Śivamayakośa*, the body of God Śiva.

The physical body (*annamaya kośa*) is also called *sthūla śarīra*, “gross body.” The soul body (*ānandamaya kośa*) is also called *kāraṇa śarīra*, “causal body.” The *prāṇamaya*, *manomaya* and *viññānamaya kośas* together comprise the *sūkṣma śarīra*, “subtle body,” with the *prāṇamaya* shell disintegrating at death. See *actinic*, *actinodic*, *manomaya kośa*, *niyati*, *odic*, *śarīra*, *soul*, *subtle body*.

**Kṛiṣṇa.** कृष्ण “Black.” Also related to *kṛiṣṭh*, meaning “drawing, attracting.” One of the most popular Gods of the Hindu pantheon. He is worshiped by *Vaiṣṇavas* as the eighth *avatāra*, incarnation, of *Vishnu*. He is best known as the Supreme Personage depicted in the *Mahābhārata*, and specifically in the *Bhagavad Gītā*. For *Gaudiya Vaiṣṇavism*, *Kṛiṣṇa* is the Godhead.

**Kṛittikā Dīpa.** कृत्तिकादीप A joyous one-day festival on the *Kṛittikā nakshatra* (Pleiades constellation), in November-December, when God Śiva is worshiped as an infinite pillar of light. Great bonfires are lit at night on hills and in villages in India and elsewhere to represent the divine, all-permeating light of *Parāśakti*. See *festival*.

**kṛiyā.** क्रिया “Action.” In a general sense, *kṛiyā* can refer to doing of any kind. Specifically, it names religious action, especially rites or ceremonies. In *yoga* terminology, *kṛiyā* names involuntary physical movements caused by the arousal of the *kundalinī*. See *pāda*.

**Kṛiyākramadyotikā.** क्रियाक्रमद्योतिका A manual by *Aghoraśiva* (ca 1050) detailing *Āgamic Śaiva* ritual. It is used widely by South Indian priests today.

**kṛiyamāna karma.** क्रियमानकर्म “Actions being made.” See *karma*.

**kṛiyā pāda** क्रियापाद “Stage of religious action, worship.” The stage of

- worship and devotion, second of four progressive stages of maturation on the Śaiva Siddhānta path of attainment See *pāda*.
- kriyā śakti* क्रियाशक्ति "Action power" The universal force of doing See *Śakti*, *trīśūla*
- kṣhamā*. क्षमा "Patience" See *yama-niyama*
- kṣatriya* क्षत्रिय "Governing, sovereign" The social class of lawmakers, law-enforcers and military See *varna dharma*
- Kūḍala Sangamadeva* कूडलसङ्गमदेव A name of Śiva meaning "Lord of rivers' confluence"
- kula*. कुल "Family, home, group of families" See *extended family*, *joint family*
- kula guru* कुलगुरु The spiritual preceptor of the family or extended family
- Kulārṇava Tantra* कुलार्णवतन्त्र A leading scripture of the Kaula school of Śāktism It comprises 17 chapters totaling 2,058 verses which focus on ways to liberation, with notable chapters on the *guru-śiṣya* relationship
- Kumāra*. कुमार "Virgin youth, ever-youthful" A name of Lord Kārttikeya as an eternal bachelor See *Kārttikeya*
- kumbha* कुम्भ "Jar or pot, water vessel"
- kundalinī*. कुण्डलिनी "She who is coiled, serpent power" The primordial cosmic energy in every individual which, at first, lies coiled like a serpent at the base of the spine and eventually, through the practice of *yoga*, rises up the *sushumnā nāḍī* As it rises, the *kundalinī* awakens each successive *chakra*. *Nirvikalpa samādhi*, enlightenment, comes as it pierces through the door of Brahman at the core of the *sahasrāra* and enters! *Kundalinī śakti* then returns to rest in any one of the seven *chakras* Śivasāyujya is complete when the *kundalinī* arrives back in the *sahasrāra* and remains coiled in this crown *chakra*. See *chakra*, *door of Brahman*, *samādhi*, *nāḍī*, *tantrism*
- kunkuma* कुकुम्भ "Saffron, red" The red powder, made of turmeric and lime, worn by Hindus as the *pottu*, dot, at the point of the third eye on the forehead Names the saffron plant, *Crocus sativus*, and its pollen
- Kūrma Purāṇa*. कूर्मपुराण "Tortoise story" One of the six *Śiva Purāṇas*, it glorifies the worship of Śiva and Durgā
- Kuruṣhetra*. कुरुक्षेत्र An extensive plain near Delhi, scene of the great war between the Kauravas and Pāṇḍavas See *Mahābhārata*, *Bhagavad Gītā*
- Kuśika* कुशिक One of four known disciples of Lakulīṣa
- kuttuvilaku* குத்துவிளக்கு A standing lamp found in the temple, shrine room or home It is made of metal, with several wicks fed by *ghee* or special oils Used to light the home and used in *pūjā* Part of temple and shrine altars, the standing lamp is sometimes worshiped as the divine light, *Parāśakti* or *Parajyoti* Returning from the temple and lighting one's *kuttuvilaku* courts the accompanying *devas* to remain in the home and channels the vibration of the temple sanctum sanctorum into the home shrine Called *dīpastambha* in Sanskrit.
- kuṭumba* कुटुम्ब "Joint family" See *extended family*, *joint family*



**Lakshmī.** लक्ष्मी “Mark or sign,” often of success or prosperity Śakti, the Universal Mother, as Goddess of wealth The mythological consort of Vishnu Usually depicted on a lotus flower Prayers are offered to Lakshmī for wealth, beauty and peace See *Goddess, Śakti*  
**Lakuliśa** लकुलीश The most prominent *guru* (ca 200) of the ancient Pāśupata school of Śaivism The *Pāśupa-*

*ta Sūtras* are attributed to him See *Śaivism*

**Lallā.** (Lalāsa ललस in Sanskrit.) A woman *Kashmīr Śaivite* saint (ca 1300) whose intensely mystical poems, *Lalla Vākyaṇi*, describe her inner experiences of oneness with Śiva See *Kashmīr Śaivism*

**lance:** A spear See *vel, Kārttikeya*.

**larder** Pantry, room in a house where food supplies are kept.

**laud** To praise To sing, chant or speak the qualities or glories of

**lavish** Very abundant or generous in giving or spending

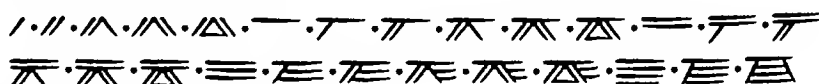
**left-handed.** *Vāma mārga* A term describing certain *tantric* practices where the instincts and intellect are transcended, and detachment is sought through practices and behavior which are contrary to orthodox social behavior See *tantra, tantrika, tantrism*

**legend** A story of uncertain historical basis, transmitted from generation to generation See *folk narratives, kathā, mythology*

**legislate** To make or pass laws

**legitimate.** According to the rules or the law Authentic, reasonable

**lekhaprārtha havana.** लेखप्रार्थहवन “Written-prayer-burning rite” A coined term for the ancient practice of sending written prayers to the Gods by burning them in a sanctified fire in a temple or shrine Alternately this rite can be performed at other appropriate sites, with four persons sitting around a fire and chanting to create a temporary temple Prayers can be written in any language, but should be clearly legible, in black ink on white paper The *devas* have provided a special script, called Tyaf, especially for this purpose Its letters, from A to Z, which replace the letters of the Roman script, looks like this



**lest.** For fear that a thing might happen

**liberal Hinduism** A synonym for Smārtism and the closely related neo-Indian religion See *neo-Indian religion, Smārtism, universalist*

**liberation** *Moksha*, release from the bonds of *pāśa*, after which the soul is liberated from *samsāra* (the round of births and deaths) In Śaiva Siddhānta, *pāśa* is the three-fold bondage of *ānava*, *karma* and *māyā*, which limit and confine the soul to the reincarnational cycle so that it may evolve *Moksha* is freedom from the fettering power of these bonds, which do not cease

- to exist, but no longer have the power to fetter or bind the soul See *mala*, *jīvanmukti*, *moksha*, *pāśa*, *reincarnation*, *satguru*, *Self Realization*, *soul*
- licentious** Morally unrestrained, especially in sexual behavior
- light** In an ordinary sense, a form of energy which makes physical objects visible to the eye In a religious-mystical sense, light also illumines inner objects (i.e., mental images) —**inner light** light perceived inside the head and body, of which there are varying intensities When the *karmas* have been sufficiently quieted, the meditator can see and enjoy inner light independently of mental images —**moon-like inner light**. Inner light perceived at a first level of intensity, glowing softly, much like the moon The meditator's first experience of it is an important milestone in unfoldment —**clear white light**. Inner light at a high level of intensity, very clear and pure When experienced fully, it is seen to be permeating all of existence, the universal substance of all form, inner and outer, pure consciousness, *Satchidānanda* This experience, repeated at regular intervals, can yield "a knowing greater than you could acquire at any university or institute of higher learning" See *Śiva consciousness*, *tattva*
- Linga**. लिङ्ग "Mark" See *Śivalinga*, *svayambhū* *Linga*
- Lingāchāra** लिङ्गाचार Daily worship of the Śivalinga One of the five essential codes of conduct for Vira Śaivites See *Pañchāchāra*, *Vira Śaivism*
- Linga Dikshā** लिङ्गदीक्षा The Vira Śaiva initiation ceremony in which the guru ties a small Śivalinga (*Ishtalinga*) around the neck of the devotee and enjoins him-her to worship it twice daily This initiation replaces the sacred thread ceremony, *upanayana* See *Vira Śaivism*
- Linga Purāna**. लिङ्ग पुराण One of the six principal *Śiva Purānas* This text explains the *purushārthas* (the four goals of life) and the significance of Śivalinga worship See *Purāna*
- Lingāṣṭakam** लिङ्गाष्टकम् A short hymn of eight verses in praise of the Śivalinga
- Lingavanta** लिङ्गवन्त "Wearer of the Linga" (Hindi *Lingāyat*) Alternate term for Vira Śaivite See *Vira Śaivism*
- liturgy** The proper, prescribed forms of ritual
- livelihood**. Subsistence, or the means of obtaining it One's profession, trade or employment See *dharma*, *caste*.
- loka** लोक "World, habitat, realm, or plane of existence" From *loc*, "to shine, be bright, visible" A dimension of manifest existence, cosmic region Each *loka* reflects or involves a particular range of consciousness The three primary *lokas* are 1) —**Bhūloka**. "Earth world" The world perceived through the five senses, also called the gross plane, as it is the most dense of the worlds 2) —**Antarloka** "Inner or in-between world" Known in English as the subtle or astral plane, the intermediate dimension between the physical and causal worlds, where souls in their astral bodies sojourn between incarnations and when they sleep 3) —**Śivaloka** "World of Śiva," and of



*instinctive mind, kośa, odic, soul, subtle body, vāsanā*

**mānsāhāra** मासाहार "Meat-eating"

**mānsāhārī** मासाहारी "Meat-eater" Those who follow a non-vegetarian diet  
See *meat-eater, vegetarian*

**mantra** मन्त्र "Mystic formula" A sound, syllable, word or phrase endowed with special power, usually drawn from scripture *Mantras* are chanted loudly during *pūjā* to invoke the Gods and establish a force field Certain *mantras* are repeated softly or mentally for *japa*, the subtle tones quieting the mind, harmonizing the inner bodies and stimulating latent spiritual qualities Hinduism's universal *mantra* is Aum To be truly effective, such *mantras* must be given by the preceptor through initiation See *Aum, incantation, japa, pūjā, yajña*

**Mantra Gopya** मन्त्रगोप्य The collected writings of Allama Prabhu See *Allama Prabhu*

**Manu Dharma Śāstra** मनुधर्मशास्त्र "Sage Manu's law book" An encyclopedic treatise of 2,685 verses on Hindu law assembled as early as 600 BCE Among its major features are the support of *varna dharma*, *āśrama dharma*, *strī dharma* and seeing the Self in all beings Despite its caste-based restrictions, which determine one's life unrelentingly from birth to death, it remains the source of much of modern Hindu culture and law These "Laws of Manu" are the oldest and considered the most authoritative of the greater body of *Dharma Śāstras* Even during the time of the British Raj in India, law was largely based on these texts The text is widely available today in several languages (Bühler's English translation is over 500 pages) See *caste, dharma, Dharma Śāstras, Kalpa Vedāṅga*

**mārga** मार्ग "Path, way" From *mārg*, "to seek" See *pāda*

**marital** Having to do with marriage See *grihastha, griheśvara and grihanī*

**Mariyamman** மாரியம்மன் "Smallpox Goddess," protectress from plagues  
See *Amman, Śakti, Śāktism*

**marriage covenant.** The written (or verbal) statements of bride and groom expressing the promises and expectations of their marriage Known in Sanskrit as *vānnīśchaya*, "settlement by word"

**Mātanga Parameśvara Āgama** मातङ्गपरमेश्वर आगम Among the 28 *Sarva Siddhānta Āgamas*, containing 3,500 verses, deals at length with the categories of existence (*tattvas*) The Angkor Wat temple in Cambodia is thought to have been built using the temple section of this scripture See *Sarva Āgamas*

**material cause** *Upādāna kāraṇa* The substance of creation, *māyā*, Śiva's "mirific energy" In Śaivism, material cause, *māyā*, is threefold *suddha* ("pure") *māyā*, *suddhāśuddha* ("pure-impure") *māyā* and *asuddha* ("impure") *māyā* *Suddha māyā*, or *bindu*, is the material cause of the causal plane *Suddhāśuddha māyā* is the material cause of the subtle plane *Asuddhamāyā* (or *Prakṛiti*) is the material cause of the gross plane See *cause, māyā, tattva*

**materialism (materialistic)** The doctrine that matter is the only reality, that all life, thought and feelings are but the effects of movements of matter, and that there exist no worlds but the physical. Materialists usually hold that there is no God—a cosmic, material, prime mover perhaps, but no personal God. An Indian school of thought which propounded this view was the Chārvāka. See *atheism, Chārvāka, nāstika, worldly*

**mati.** मति "Cognition, understanding, conviction" See *yama-niyama*.

**matrimonial** Related to marriage

**Matsyendranātha.** मत्स्येन्द्रनाथ A patron saint of Nepal, guru of Gorakshanātha and a mystic in the Nātha tradition (ca 900). Some consider him to have been the foremost human teacher of *haṭha yoga*. See *haṭha yoga*.

**Mattamayūra Order.** मत्तमयूर A Śaiva Siddhānta monastic order founded by Purandara (successor to Rudraśambhu), centered in the Punjab. Members of this order served as advisors to the king.

**matter.** Substance, especially of the physical world. May also refer to all of manifest existence, including the subtle, nonphysical dimensions. See *māyā*.

**mature.** Ripe, fully grown or developed

**maya.** मय "Consisting of; made of," as in *manomaya*, "made of mind"

**māyā.** माया "She who measures," or "mirific energy." The substance emanated from Śiva through which the world of form is manifested. Hence all creation is also termed *māyā*. It is the cosmic creative force, the principle of manifestation, ever in the process of creation, preservation and dissolution. *Māyā* is a key concept in Hinduism, originally meaning "supernatural power; God's mirific energy," often translated as "illusion." The *Upanishads* underscore *māyā*'s captivating nature, which blinds souls to the transcendent Truth. In Śaṅkara's Vedāntic interpretation, *māyā* is taken as pure illusion or unreality. In Śaivism it is one of the three bonds (*pāśa*) that limit the soul and thereby facilitate its evolution. For Śaivites and most other nondualists, it is understood not as illusion but as relative reality, in contrast to the unchanging Absolute Reality. In the Śaiva Siddhānta system, there are three main divisions of *māyā*, the pure, the pure-impure and the impure realms. Pure or *śuddha māyā* consists of the first five *tattvas*—Śiva *tattva*, Śakti *tattva*, Sadāśiva *tattva*, Īśvara *tattva* and Śuddhavidyā *tattva*. The pure-impure realm consists of the next seven *tattvas*. The impure realm consists of the *māyā tattva* and all of its evolutes—from the *kāla tattva* to *prithivī*, the element earth. Thus, in relation to the physical universe, *māyā* is the principle of ever-changing matter. In Vaiṣṇavism, *māyā* is one of the nine Śaktis of Viṣṇu. See. *loka, mind (universal), mirific, tattva, world*.

**mayūra.** मयूर "Peacock." The *vāhana*, or mount, of Lord Kārttikeya, symbolizing effulgent beauty and religion in full glory. The peacock is able to control powerful snakes, such as the cobra, symbolizing the soulful domination of the instinctive elements—or control of the *kundalinī*, which is *yoga*. See *Kārttikeya, vāhana*.

**mahāsamādhi day** Anniversary of the transition of a great soul See *creation, death, reincarnation, samādhi, transition*.

**Mahāśivarātri**. महाशिवरात्रि "Śiva's great night" Śaivism's foremost festival, celebrated on the night before the new moon in February-March Fasting and an all-night vigil are observed as well as other disciplines chanting, praying, meditating and worshipping Śiva as the Source and Self of all that exists See *festival*

**mahātala** महातल Sixth netherworld Region of consciencelessness See *chakra*.

**mahātma**. महात्म "Great soul" Honorific title given to people held in high esteem, especially saints See *ātman*

**mahāvākya**. महावाक्य "Great saying" A profound aphorism from scripture or a holy person Most famous are four Upanishadic proclamations *Prajanam Brahma* ("Pure consciousness is God"—*Aitareya U*), *Aham Brahmasmi* ("I am God"—*Bṛihadāranyaka U*), *Tat tvam asi* ("Thou art That"—*Chandogya U*) and *Ayam ātma Brahma* ("The soul is God"—*Māndūkya U*)

**maheśa**. महेश "Great God" Term used by Vīra Śaivites to mean charity, seeing all as God See *śaṣṭhala*

**Maheśvara** महेश्वर "Great Lord" In Śaiva Siddhānta, the name of Śiva's energy of veiling grace, one of five aspects of Parameśvara, the Primal Soul *Maheśvara* is also a popular name for Lord Śiva as Primal Soul and personal Lord See *Cosmic Dance, Naṭarāja, Parameśvara*

**Maitreya** मैत्रेय One of four known disciples of *Lakulīṣa*. See *Pāśupata Śaivism*.

**Maitrī Upanishad**. मैत्री उपनिषद् Belongs to the *Maitrāyaṇīya* branch of the *Kṛishna Yajur Veda*. A later *Upanishad* covering *Aum*, outer nature, the Self, control of the mind, etc

**mala**. मल "Impurity" An important term in Śaivism referring to three bonds, called *pāsa*—*ānava*, *karma*, and *māyā*—which limit the soul, preventing it from knowing its true, divine nature See *liberation, pāsa*.

**mālā**. माला "Garland" A strand of beads for holy recitation, *japa*, usually made of *rudrāksha*, *tulasī*, sandalwood or crystal Also a flower garland

**malaparipāka**. मलपरिपाक "Maturing of the malas" See *ānava, karma, mala*.

**Mālatī-Mādhava**. मालतीमाधव A Sanskrit play by Bhavabhūti (ca 500) Primarily a love story, it contains incidental descriptions of the Kāpālīka Śaivite sect of ascetics

**malice**. Ill will, desire or intent to do harm to another, generally without conscience See *mahātala*.

**manana**. मनन "Thinking, deep reflection" See *self-reflection*.

**manas** मनस् "Mind, understanding" The lower or instinctive mind, seat of desire and governor of sensory and motor organs, called *indriyas* *Manas* is termed the undisciplined, empirical mind *Manas* is characterized by desire, determination, doubt, faith, lack of faith, steadfastness, lack of stead-

fastness, shame, intellection and fear It is a faculty of *manomaya kośa*, the lower astral or instinctive-intellectual sheath See *awareness*, *indriya*, *instinctive mind*, *manomaya kośa*, *mind (individual)*

*manas chitta* मनस् चित्त "Instinctive mind" See *manas*, *manomaya kośa*, *instinctive mind*

*mandala* मण्डल "Circular; orb, mystic diagram" A circle Name of the chapters of the *Rig Veda Samhitā* A circular diagram without beginning or end—which indicates the higher and the lower and other possibilities—upon which one meditates A tapestry, picture or grouping of words used in meditation to enter the realms depicted

*mandapa*. मण्डप From *mand*, "to deck, adorn" Temple precinct, a temple compound, open hall or chamber In entering a large temple, one passes through a series of *mandapas*, each named according to its position, e g , *mukhamandapa*, "facing chamber" In some temples, *mandapas* are concentrically arranged See *mahāmandapa*, *temple*.

*mandira*. मन्दिर Temple, abode" See *devamandira*, *temple*.

*Māndūkya Upanishad*. माण्डूक्य उपनिषद् A "principal" *Upanishad* (belonging to the *Atharva Veda*) which, in 12 concise verses, teaches of Aum and the four states (*avasthā*) of awareness waking (*viśva*), dreaming (*taijasa*), dreamless sleep (*prājña*) and transcendent, spiritual consciousness (*turiya*)

*mangala kriyā* मङ्गलक्रिया "Auspicious action or practice" Hindu culture

*Mangalavede*. मङ्गलवेदे A town in Karnataka, South India

*manifest*. To show or reveal Percervable or knowable, therefore having form

The opposite of unmanifest or transcendent See *formless*, *tattva*

*manifold* Varied Having many forms, aspects, parts

*Manikkavasagar*. மாணிக்கவாசகர் "He of ruby-like utterances" Tamil saint who contributed to the medieval Śaivite renaissance (ca 850) He gave up his position as prime minister to follow a renunciate life His poetic *Tiruvasagam*, "holy utterances"—a major Śaiva Siddhānta scripture (part of the eighth *Tirumurai*) and a jewel of Tamil literature—express his aspirations, trials and *yogic* realizations See *Nalvar*, *Tirumurai*

*manipūra chakra* मणिपूरचक्र "Wheeled city of jewels" Solar-plexus center of willpower See *chakra*

*mankolam* மாங்கோலம் "Mango design" The paisley, a stylized image of the mango, symbol of auspiciousness, associated with Lord Ganeśa

*manomaya kośa*. मनोमयकोश "Mind-made sheath" The astral or instinctive-intellectual aspect of the soul's subtle body (*sūkshma śarīra*), also called the odic-astral sheath It is the sheath of ordinary thought, desire and emotion The *manomaya kośa* is made up of odic *prāṇa* and is almost an exact duplicate of the physical body However, changes that appear upon the physical body, such as aging, first occur within the structure of this sheath of the astral body This is the sheath of the subconscious mind, it can be easily disturbed and is sometimes called the lower mind

the Gods and highly evolved souls. The causal plane, also called *Kāraṇaloka*, existing deep within the *Antarloka* at a higher level of vibration, it is a world of superconsciousness and extremely refined energy. It is the plane of creativity and intuition, the quantum level of the universe, where souls exist in self-effulgent bodies made of actinic particles of light. It is here that God and Gods move and lovingly guide the evolution of all the worlds and shed their ever-flowing grace. Its vibratory rate is that of the *viśuddha*, *ājñā* and *sahasrāra chakras* and those above. From the perspective of the seven worlds, the *Śivaloka* is of three levels: *Janaloka*, "creative plane" (*viśuddha chakra*), *Tapoloka*, "plane of austerity" (*ājñā chakra*), and *Satyaloaka*, "plane of reality" (*sahasrāra chakra*), also called *Brahmaloka*.

The *Antarloka* and *Śivaloka* are the ever-present substratum of physical existence, most frequently experienced by humans during sleep and deep meditation. Each *loka* is a microcosm of the next higher world, which is its macrocosm, e.g., the physical plane is a microcosm (a smaller and less-refined version) of the *Antarloka*. See: *Hindu cosmology, three worlds*

**lotus āsana** The most famous of *haṭha yoga* poses and the optimum position for meditation. It is known as the *padmāsana* (lotus pose), as the legs are crossed, turning the soles of the feet up, which then resemble a lotus flower. See: *āsana, haṭha yoga*

**lute** A stringed instrument of highly pleasant sound.



**macrocosm** "Great world or universe." See: *microcosm-macrocosm, pūrṇa, three worlds*

**Madhumateya** मधुमतेय A Śaiva Siddhānta monastic order founded by Pavaṇaśiva, preceptor of the Kalachuri kings of Central India.

**Mādhva** माध्व South Indian Vaiṣṇava saint (1197–1278) who expounded a purely dualistic (pluralistic) Vedānta

in which there is an essential and eternal distinction between God, soul and world, and between all beings and things. He is also one of the few Hindus to have taught the existence of an eternal hell where lost souls would be condemned to suffer forever. See: *dvaita-advaita, Vedānta*

**mahā** महा A prefix meaning "great."

**Mahābhārata** महाभारत "Great Epic of India." The world's longest epic poem. It revolves around the conflict between two kingdoms, the Pāṇḍavas and Kauravas, and their great battle of Kurukṣetra near modern Delhi in approximately 1424 BCE. Woven through the plot are countless discourses on philosophy, religion, astronomy, cosmology, polity, economics and many stories illustrative of simple truths and ethical principles. The *Bhagavad Gītā* is one section of the work. The *Mahābhārata* is revered as scripture by Vaiṣṇavites and Smārtas. See: *Bhagavad Gītā, Itihāsa*

**Mahādeva** महादेव "Great shining one, God." Referring either to God Śiva or

any of the highly evolved beings who live in the Śivaloka in their natural, effulgent soul bodies God Śiva in His perfection as Primal Soul is one of the Mahādevas, yet He is unique and incomparable in that He alone is uncreated, the Father-Mother and Destiny of all other Mahādevas He is called Parameśvara, "Supreme God" He is the Primal Soul, whereas the other Gods are individual souls It is said in scripture that there are 330 million Gods See *Gods, monotheism, Parameśvara, Śiva*.

**Mahādeva Mountain** See *Vasugupta*.

**Mahākāla** महाकाल "Great time," or "dissolver of time" One of the names and forms of Śiva Mahākāla is Time beyond time, who devours all things and forms and, by so doing, helps the soul transcend all dualities Mystically, time devours itself and thus the timeless state is achieved See *tattva mahākutumba* महाकुटुम्ब "Great or extended family" See *extended family mahāmandapa* महामण्डप "Great hall" Main, outer assembly hall in the temple where devotees gather for ceremony See *mandapa, temple*.

**Mahānārāyaṇa Upaniṣad** महानारायण उपनिषद् A philosophical text of the *Kṛṣṇa Yajur Veda*

**Mahānirvāṇa Tantra** महानिर्वाणितन्त्र "Treatise on the great emancipation"

An 11th-century *advaita* scripture dealing with *mantra* and esoteric rituals **mahāpralaya** महाप्रलय "Great dissolution" Total annihilation of the universe at the end of a *mahākālpa* It is the absorption of all existence, including time, space and individual consciousness, all the *lokas* and their inhabitants into God Śiva, as the water of a river returns to its source, the sea Then Śiva alone exists in His three perfections, until He again issues forth creation During this incredibly vast period there are many partial dissolutions, *pralayas*, when either the Bhūloka or the Bhūloka and the Antarloka are destroyed See *cosmic cycle, pralaya*

**mahāprasthāna** महाप्रस्थान "Great departure" Death See *death, transition*.

**mahārāja** महाराज "Great king" Indian monarch Title of respect for political or (in modern times) spiritual leaders

**Mahārāshtra** महाराष्ट्र Central state of modern India whose capital is Bombay Area 118,717 square miles, population 63 million

**maharishi (mahārshi)** महर्षि "Great seer" Title for the greatest and most influential of *siddhas*

**Maharloka** महर्लोक "Plane of greatness" From *mahas*, "greatness, might, power, glory" Also called the Devaloka, this fourth highest of the seven upper worlds is the mental plane, realm of *anāhata chakra*. See *loka*

**mahāsākāra-pinda** महासाकार पिण्ड "Great manifest body" In Siddha Siddhānta Śaivism, the first manifestation of Śiva out of the transcendent state From it all of existence issues forth See *pinda*.

**mahāsamādhi** महासमाधि "Great ecstasy" The death, or dropping off of the physical body, of a great soul, an event occasioned by tremendous blessings Also names the shrine in which the remains of a great soul are entombed

*instinctive mind, kośa, odic, soul, subtle body, vāsanā*

**mānsāhāra** मासाहार "Meat-eating"

**mānsāhārī** मासाहारी "Meat-eater" Those who follow a non-vegetarian diet

See *meat-eater, vegetarian*

**mantra** मन्त्र "Mystic formula" A sound, syllable, word or phrase endowed with special power, usually drawn from scripture *Mantras* are chanted loudly during *pūjā* to invoke the Gods and establish a force field Certain *mantras* are repeated softly or mentally for *japa*, the subtle tones quieting the mind, harmonizing the inner bodies and stimulating latent spiritual qualities Hinduism's universal *mantra* is Aum To be truly effective, such *mantras* must be given by the preceptor through initiation See *Aum, incantation, japa, pūjā, yajña*

**Mantra Gopya** मन्त्रगोप्य The collected writings of Allama Prabhu See *Allama Prabhu*.

**Manu Dharma Śāstra** मनुधर्मशास्त्र "Sage Manu's law book" An encyclopedic treatise of 2,685 verses on Hindu law assembled as early as 600 BCE Among its major features are the support of *varna dharma*, *āśrama dharma*, *strī dharma* and seeing the Self in all beings Despite its caste-based restrictions, which determine one's life unrelentingly from birth to death, it remains the source of much of modern Hindu culture and law These "Laws of Manu" are the oldest and considered the most authoritative of the greater body of *Dharma Śāstras* Even during the time of the British Raj in India, law was largely based on these texts The text is widely available today in several languages (Bühler's English translation is over 500 pages) See *caste, dharma, Dharma Śāstras, Kalpa Vedāṅga*

**mārga** मार्ग "Path, way" From *mārg*, "to seek" See *pāda*

**marital** Having to do with marriage See *grihastha, griheśvara and grihani*

**Mariyamman** மாரியம்மன் "Smallpox Goddess," protectress from plagues See *Anman, Śakti, Śāktism*

**marriage covenant** The written (or verbal) statements of bride and groom expressing the promises and expectations of their marriage Known in Sanskrit as *vānnīśchaya*, "settlement by word"

**Mātanga Paramesvara Āgama** मातङ्गपरमेश्वर आगम Among the 28 *Śaiva Sīd-dhānta Āgamas*, containing 3,500 verses, deals at length with the categories of existence (*tattvas*) The Angkor Wat temple in Cambodia is thought to have been built using the temple section of this scripture See *Śaiva Āgamas*

**material cause** *Upādāna kāraṇa* The substance of creation, *māyā*, Śiva's "mirific energy" In Śaivism, material cause, *māyā*, is threefold *śuddha* ("pure") *māyā*, *śuddhāśuddha* ("pure-impure") *māyā* and *asuddha* ("impure") *māyā* *Śuddha māyā*, or *bindu*, is the material cause of the causal plane *Śuddhāśuddha māyā* is the material cause of the subtle plane *Asud-dhamāyā* (or *Prakṛiti*) is the material cause of the gross plane See *cause, māyā, tattva*

**materialism (materialistic)** The doctrine that matter is the only reality, that all life, thought and feelings are but the effects of movements of matter, and that there exist no worlds but the physical. Materialists usually hold that there is no God—a cosmic, material, prime mover perhaps, but no personal God. An Indian school of thought which propounded this view was the Chārvāka. See *atheism, Chārvāka, nāstika, worldly*

**mati:** मति "Cognition, understanding; conviction" See *yama-niyama*.

**matrimonial.** Related to marriage

**Matsyendranātha** मत्स्येन्द्रनाथ A patron saint of Nepal, *guru* of Gorakshanātha and a mystic in the Nātha tradition (ca 900). Some consider him to have been the foremost human teacher of *haṭha yoga*. See *haṭha yoga*.

**Mattamayūra Order** मत्तमयूर A Śaiva Siddhānta monastic order founded by Purandara (successor to Rudraśambhu), centered in the Punjab. Members of this order served as advisors to the king.

**matter** Substance, especially of the physical world. May also refer to all of manifest existence, including the subtle, nonphysical dimensions. See *māyā*.

**mature:** Ripe, fully grown or developed

**maya.** मय "Consisting of; made of," as in *manomaya*, "made of mind"

**māyā.** माया "She who measures," or "mirific energy." The substance emanated from Śiva through which the world of form is manifested. Hence all creation is also termed *māyā*. It is the cosmic creative force, the principle of manifestation, ever in the process of creation, preservation and dissolution. *Māyā* is a key concept in Hinduism, originally meaning "supernatural power; God's mirific energy," often translated as "illusion." The *Upanishads* underscore *māyā*'s captivating nature, which blinds souls to the transcendent Truth. In Śaṅkara's Vedāntic interpretation, *māyā* is taken as pure illusion or unreality. In Śaivism it is one of the three bonds (*pāśa*) that limit the soul and thereby facilitate its evolution. For Śaivites and most other nondualists, it is understood not as illusion but as relative reality, in contrast to the unchanging Absolute Reality. In the Śaiva Siddhānta system, there are three main divisions of *māyā*, the pure, the pure-impure and the impure realms. Pure or *śuddha māyā* consists of the first five *tattvas*—Śiva *tattva*, Śakti *tattva*, Sadāśiva *tattva*, Īśvara *tattva* and Śuddhavidyā *tattva*. The pure-impure realm consists of the next seven *tattvas*. The impure realm consists of the *māyā tattva* and all of its evolutes—from the *kāla tattva* to *prithivī*, the element earth. Thus, in relation to the physical universe, *māyā* is the principle of ever-changing matter. In Vaiṣṇavism, *māyā* is one of the nine Śaktis of Viṣṇu. See *loka, mind (universal), mirific, tattva, world*.

**mayūra.** मयूर "Peacock." The *vāhana*, or mount, of Lord Kārttikeya, symbolizing effulgent beauty and religion in full glory. The peacock is able to control powerful snakes, such as the cobra, symbolizing the soulful domination of the instinctive elements—or control of the *kundalinī*, which is *yoga*. See *Kārttikeya, vāhana*.



- mean** As a verb “to signify” As an adjective base, low-minded, selfish
- meat-eater** *Mānsāhārī* Those who follow a nonvegetarian diet They are described in the following passage from the obscure *Mānsāhāra Parihāsajal-pita Stotram* “Those who eat the flesh of other creatures are nothing less than gristle-grinders, blood-drinkers, muscle-munchers, sinew-chewers, carcass-crunchers, flesh-feeders—those who make their throat a garbage pit and their stomach a graveyard—mean, angry, loathsomely jealous, confused and beset by covetousness, who without restraint would lie, deceive, kill or steal to solve immediate problems They are flesh-feeders, loathsome to the Gods, but friendly to the *asuras*, who become their Gods and Goddesses, the blood-sucking monsters who inhabit Naraka and deceptively have it decorated to look like the *pitṛiloka*, the world of the fathers To such beings the deluded meat-eaters pay homage and prostrate while munching the succulent flesh off bones” See *vegetarianism*
- mediatrix** A go-between, intermediary or reconciler between two parties The feminine form of the term *mediator*
- meditation** *Dhyāna*. Sustained concentration Meditation describes a quiet, alert, powerfully concentrated state wherein new knowledge and insights are awakened from within as awareness focuses one-pointedly on an object or specific line of thought. See *internalized worship, rāja yoga, Satchidānanda*.
- mediumship** Act or practice of serving as a channel through which beings of inner worlds communicate with humans See *folk-shamanic, trance*.
- mendicant**. A beggar, a wandering monk, or *sādhu*, who lives on alms
- menses** A woman’s monthly menstruation period, during which, by Hindu tradition, she rests from her usual activities and forgoes public and family religious functions
- mental body (sheath)** The higher-mind layer of the subtle or astral body in which the soul functions in Maharloka of the Antarloka or subtle plane In Sanskrit, the mental body is *vyñānamaya kośa*, “sheath of cognition” See *intellectual mind, kośa, subtle body*
- mental plane** Names the refined strata of the subtle world It is called Maharloka or Devaloka, realm of *anāhata chakra*. Here the soul is shrouded in the mental or cognitive sheath, called *vyñānamaya kośa*
- merge** To lose distinctness or identity by being absorbed To unite or become one with
- merger of the soul** See *evolution of the soul, viśvagrāsa*
- meritorious** Having merit, deserving of praise or reward See *punya*.
- mesmerizing** Hypnotizing, spell-binding, fascinating
- metamorphosis** Complete transformation, as in a caterpillar’s becoming a butterfly See *kundalīnī, reincarnation*
- metaphysics** 1) The branch of philosophy dealing with first causes and nature of reality 2) The science of mysticism See *darśana, mysticism*

**Meykandar** மெய்கண்டர “Truth seer” The 13th-century Tamil theologian, author (or translator from the *Raurava Āgama*) of the *Śivajñānabodham*. Founder of the Meykandar Sampradāya of pluralistic Śaiva Siddhānta. See *Śaiva Siddhānta*, *Śivajñānabodham*.

**Meykandar Śāstras** Fourteen Tamil works on Śaiva Siddhānta written during the 13th and 14th centuries by seven authors—Meykandar, Arulnandi, Uyyavanda Deva I and II, Umapati, Śivajñāna Yogin and Manavasagam Kadandar. See *Śaiva Siddhānta*, *Śivajñānabodham*.

**microcosm-macrocosm** “Little world” or “miniature universe” as compared with “great world.” *Microcosm* refers to the internal source of something larger or more external (*macrocosm*). In Hindu cosmology, the outer world is a macrocosm of the inner world, which is its microcosm and is mystically larger and more complex than the physical universe and functions at a higher rate of vibration and even a different rate of time. The microcosm precedes the macrocosm. Thus, the guiding principle of the Bhūloka comes from the Antarloka and Śivaloka. Consciousness precedes physical form. In the *tantric* tradition, the body of man is viewed as a microcosm of the entire divine creation. “Microcosm-macrocosm” is embodied in the terms *pinda* and *auda*. See *apex of creation*, *pinda*, *quantum*, *tattva*, *tantra*.

**milestone**. An event which serves as a significant marker in the progress of a project, history, etc.

**milieu** Environment, social or cultural setting.

**millennium**. A period of 1,000 years. **millennia** Plural of millennium.

**Mīmāṃsā** मीमांसा “Inquiry” See *śāśā darsana*.

**mind (five states)** A view of the mind in five parts —**conscious mind** *Jāgrat chitta* (“wakeful consciousness”) The ordinary, waking, thinking state of mind in which the majority of people function most of the day —**subconscious mind** *Samskāra chitta* (“impression mind”) The part of mind “beneath” the conscious mind, the storehouse or recorder of all experience (whether remembered consciously or not)—the holder of past impressions, reactions and desires. Also, the seat of involuntary physiological processes —**subsubconscious mind** *Vāsanā chitta* (“mind of subliminal traits”) The area of the subconscious mind formed when two thoughts or experiences of the same rate of intensity are sent into the subconscious at different times and, intermingling, give rise to a new and totally different rate of vibration. This subconscious formation later causes the external mind to react to situations according to these accumulated vibrations, be they positive, negative or mixed —**superconscious mind** *Kāraṇa chitta*. The mind of light, the all-knowing intelligence of the soul. The psychological term is *turiya*, “the fourth,” meaning the condition beyond the states of wakefulness (*jāgrat*), “dream” (*svapna*), and “deep sleep” (*sushupti*). At its deepest level, the superconscious is Parāśakti, or Satchidānanda, the Divine Mind of God Śiva. In Sanskrit, there are numerous terms for the various levels

and states of superconsciousness. Specific superconscious states such as *viśvachaitanya* ("universal consciousness"), *advaita chaitanya* ("nondual consciousness"), *adhyātma chetanā* ("spiritual consciousness") — **subsuperconscious mind** *Anukārana chitta*. The superconscious mind working through the conscious and subconscious states, which brings forth intuition, clarity and insight. See *chitta, consciousness, samskāra, Satchidānanda, vāsanā*

**mind (individual)** At the microcosmic level of individual souls, mind is consciousness and its faculties of memory, desire, thought and cognition. Individual mind is *chitta* (mind, consciousness) and its three-fold expression is called *antahkarana*, "inner faculty" composed of 1) *buddhi* ("intellect, reason, logic," higher mind), 2) *ahamkāra* ("I-maker," egoity), 3) *manas* ("lower mind," instinctive-intellectual mind, the seat of desire). From the perspective of the 36 *tattvas* (categories of existence), each of these is a *tattva* which evolves out of the one before it. Thus, from *buddhi* comes *ahamkāra* and then *manas*. *Manas, buddhi* and *ahamkāra* are faculties of the *manomaya kośa* (astral or instinctive-intellectual sheath). *Anukārana chitta*, subsuperconsciousness, the knowing mind, is the mind-state of the *viññānamaya kośa* (mental or intuitive-cognitive sheath). The aspect of mind corresponding directly to the *ānandamaya kośa* (causal body) is *kārana chitta*, superconsciousness. See *ahamkāra, antahkarana, buddhi, chitta, manas, mind (universal)*

**mind (three phases)** A perspective of mind as instinctive, intellectual and superconscious — **instinctive mind** *Manas chitta*, the seat of desire and governor of sensory and motor organs — **intellectual mind**. *Buddhi chitta*, the faculty of thought and intelligence — **superconscious mind** *Kārana chitta*, the strata of intuition, benevolence and spiritual sustenance. Its most refined essence is *Parāśakti*, or *Satchidānanda*, all-knowing, omnipresent consciousness, the One transcendental, self-luminous, divine mind common to all souls. See *awareness, consciousness, mind (five states)*

**mind (universal)** In the most profound sense, mind is the sum of all things, all energies and manifestations, all forms, subtle and gross, sacred and mundane. It is the inner and outer cosmos. Mind is *māyā*. It is the material matrix. It is everything but That, the Self within, *Paraśiva*, which is timeless, formless, causeless, spaceless, known by the knower only after Self-Realization. The Self is the indescribable, unnameable, Ultimate Reality. Mind in its subtlest form is undifferentiated Pure Consciousness, primal substance (called *Parāśakti* or *Satchidānanda*), out of which emerge the myriad forms of existence, both psychic and material. See *chitta, consciousness, māyā, tattva, world*

**minister** Someone charged with a specific function on behalf of a religious or political body, especially in serving the spiritual needs of the people. In Hinduism, this term may be applied to temple priests, monks, preceptors,

scriptural scholars and others

**minutiae** Small or relatively unimportant details

**Mīrābāī** मीराबाई A Vaishnava saint (ca 1420), poetess and mystic, said to be a Rajput princess who abandoned the world in total surrender to Lord Kṛṣṇa. Her life story and songs are popular today, especially in Gujarat

**mimic** "Wonder-making; magical, astonishing" See *māyā*, *material cause*.

**misconception** A wrong idea or concept, misunderstanding, *avidyā* See *avidyā*, *illusion*

**mitāhāra** मितहार "Measured eating; moderate appetite" A requisite to good health and an essential for success in *yoga*. The ideal portion per meal is described as no more than would fill the two hands held side by side and slightly cupped piled high, an amount called a *ludava*. All the six tastes should be within these foods (sweet, salty, sour, pungent, bitter and astringent), and the foods should be well cooked and highly nutritious. See *yama-niyama*

**modaka** मोदक "Sweets" A round lemon-sized sweet made of rice, coconut, sugar, etc. It is a favorite treat of Gaṇeśa. Esoterically, it corresponds to *śiddhi* (attainment or fulfillment), the gladdening contentment of pure joy, the sweetest of all things sweet. See *Gaṇeśa*

**moksha** मोक्ष "Liberation" Release from transmigration, *samsāra*, the round of births and deaths, which occurs after *karma* has been resolved and *nirvikalpa samādhi*—realization of the Self, Paraśiva—has been attained. Same as *mukti*. See *jīvanmukta*, *kaivalya*, *kundalinī*, *nirvikalpa samādhi*, *Paraśiva*, *rāja yoga*, *videhamukti*

**monastic** A monk or nunk (based on the Greek *monos*, "alone") A man or woman who has withdrawn from the world and lives an austere, religious life, either alone or with others in a monastery (Not to be confused with *monistic*, having to do with the doctrine of monism.) Terms for Hindu monastics include *sādhaka*, *sādhū*, *muni*, *tapasvin*, *vairāgī*, *ūdāsin* and *sannyāsin*. (Feminine *sādhikā*, *sādhvī*, *munī*, *tapasvinī*, *vairāgīnī*, and *sannyāsinī*) A monastery-dweller is a *maṭhavāsi*, and *sādhū* is a rough equivalent for mendicant. See *monk*, *nunk*, *sannyāsin*, *sannyāsinī*, *vairāgī*

**monism** "Doctrine of oneness" 1) The philosophical view that there is only one ultimate substance or principle. 2) The view that reality is a unified whole without independent parts. See *dvaita-advaita*, *pluralism*

**monistic theism** Advaita Śvaravāda. Monism is the doctrine that reality is a one whole or existence without independent parts. Theism is the belief that God exists as a real, conscious, personal Supreme Being. Monistic theism is the dipolar doctrine, also called panentheism, that embraces both monism and theism, two perspectives ordinarily considered contradictory or mutually exclusive, since theism implies dualism. Monistic theism simultaneously accepts that God has a personal form, that He creates, pervades and is all that exists—and that He ultimately transcends all existence

and that the soul is, in essence, one with God Advaita Siddhānta (monistic Śaiva Siddhānta, or Advaita Īśvaravāda Śaiva Siddhānta) is a specific form of monistic theism See *advaita*, *Advaita Īśvaravāda*, *Advaita Siddhānta*, *dvaita-advaita*, *panentheism*, *theism*

**monk.** A celibate man wholly dedicated to religious life, either cenobitic (residing with others in a monastery) or anchoritic (living alone, as a hermit or mendicant) Literally, “one who lives alone” (from the Greek *monos*, “alone”) Through the practice of *yoga*, the control and transmutation of the masculine and feminine forces within himself, the monk is a complete being, free to follow the contemplative and mystic life toward realization of the Self within Benevolent and strong, courageous, fearless, not entangled in the thoughts and feelings of others, monks are affectionately detached from society, defenders of the faith, kind, loving and ever-flowing with timely wisdom A synonym for *monastic*. Its feminine counterpart is *nunk*. See *monastic*, *sannyāsin*, *nunk*.

**monotheism** “Doctrine of one God” Contrasted with polytheism, meaning belief in many Gods The term *monotheism* covers a wide range of philosophical positions, from exclusive (or pure) monotheism, which recognizes only one God (such as in Semitic faiths), to inclusive monotheism, which also accepts the existence of other Gods Generally speaking, the sects of Hinduism are inclusively monotheistic in their belief in a one Supreme God, and in their reverence for other Gods, or Mahādevas However, such terms which arose out of Western philosophy do not really describe the fullness of Hindu thinking Realizing this, the author of *The Vedic Experience*, Raimundo Panikkar, has offered a new word *cosmotheandristm*, “world-God-man doctrine,” which describes a philosophy that views God, soul and world (*Patī*, *paśu*, *pāśa*) as an integrated, inseparable unity See *Advaita Īśvaravāda*, *monistic theism*, *Patī-paśu-pāśa*.

**mortal.** Subject to death Opposite of *immortal* See *amṛita*, *death*

**mortal sin** See *sin*

**Mṛigendra Āgama.** मृगेन्द्र आगम First subsidiary text (*Upāgama*) of the *Kāmi-ka Āgama*, one of the 28 Śaiva Siddhānta Āgamas It is especially valuable because its *jñāna pāda* (philosophical section) is complete and widely available Other noted sections are on hand gestures (*mudrā*) used in *pūjā* and on establishing temporary places (*yāgaśālā*) of special worship See *pāda*, *Śaiva Āgamas*

**mudrā.** मुद्रा “Seal” Esoteric hand gestures which express specific energies or powers Usually accompanied by precise visualizations, *mudrās* are a vital element of ritual worship (*pūjā*), dance and *yoga* Among the best-known *mudrās* are 1) *abhaya mudrā* (gesture of fearlessness), in which the fingers are extended, palm facing forward, 2) *añjali mudrā* (gesture of reverence), 3) *jñāna mudrā* (also known as *chin mudrā* and *yoga mudrā*), in which the thumb and index finger touch, forming a circle, with the other fingers

- extended, 4) *dhyāna mudrā* (seal of meditation), in which the two hands are open and relaxed with the palms up, resting on the folded legs, the right hand atop the left with the tips of the thumbs gently touching See *abhaya mudrā*, *añjali mudrā*, *haṭha yoga*, *namaskāra*
- muhūrta** मुहूर्त "Moment" 1) A period of time 2) A certain division of a day or night *Muhūrtas* vary slightly in length as the lengths of days and nights change through the year There are at least three *muhūrta* systems The first defines one *muhūrta* as 1/8th of a day or night (= 15 hours in a 12-hour night), the second as 1/15th of a day or night (= 48 minutes), and the third as 1/16th of a day or night (= 45 minutes) 3) *Muhūrta* also refers to the astrological science of determining the most auspicious periods for specific activities See *brāhma muhūrta*, *auspiciousness*, *sandhyā upāsana*
- mukhya** मुख्य "Head, foremost" From *mukha*, "face, countenance" Leader, guide, such as the family head, *kuṭumba mukhya* (or *pramukha*) See *extended family*, *joint family*
- mukti** मुक्ति "Release" A synonym for *moksha* See *moksha*
- Mukti Upanishad** मुक्ति उपनिषद् A 14th-century writing dealing in part with *yoga*
- mūla** मूल "Root." The root, base or bottom or basis of anything, as in *mūlādhāra chakra* Foundational, original or causal, as in *mūlagrantha*, "original text"
- mūla mantra** मूलमन्त्र "Root mystic formula" See *Aum*
- mūlādhāra chakra** मूलधारचक्र "Root-support wheel" Four-petaled psychic center at the base of the spine, governs memory See *chakra*
- multitude** A very large number of things or people
- Mundaka Upanishad** मुण्डक उपनिषद् Belongs to the *Atharva Veda* and teaches the difference between the intellectual study of the *Vedas* and their supplementary texts and the intuitive knowledge by which God is known
- munī** मुनि "Sage" A sage or *sādhu*, especially one vowed to complete silence or who speaks but rarely and who seeks stillness of mind A hermit The term is related to *mauna*, "silence" In the hymns of the *Rig Veda*, *munis* are mystic shamans associated with the God Rudra
- mūrti** मूर्ति "Form, manifestation, embodiment, personification" An image or icon of God or a God used during worship *Mūrtis* range from aniconic (*avyakta*, "nonmanifest"), such as the Śivalinga, to *vyakta* "fully manifest," e.g., anthropomorphic images such as Naṭarāja. In-between is the partially manifest (*vyaktāvyakta*), e.g., the *mukha linga*, in which the face of Śiva appears on the Śivalinga Other Deity representations include symbols, e.g., the banyan tree, and geometric icons such as *yantras* and *mandalas* Another important term for the Deity icon or idol is *pratimā*, "reflected image" See *aniconic*, *Iṣṭa Devatā*, *teradī*
- Murugan** முருகன் "Beautiful one," a favorite name of Kārttikeya among the Tamils of South India, Sri Lanka and elsewhere See *Kārttikeya*.

**muse** To think deeply

**Mūshika** मूषिक From *mūsh*, “to steal” The mouse, Lord Ganeśa’s mount, traditionally associated with abundance Symbolically, the mouse carries Lord Ganeśa’s grace into every corner of the mind See *Ganeśa, vāhana*

**Muslim** “True believer” A follower of Islam See *Islam*

**mutual** Said of something which is thought, done or felt by two or more people toward each other Shared

**mysticism**. Spirituality, the pursuit of direct spiritual or religious experience Spiritual discipline aimed at union or communion with Ultimate Reality or God through deep meditation or trance-like contemplation From the Greek *mystikos*, “of mysteries” Characterized by the belief that Truth transcends intellectual processes and must be attained through transcendent means See *clairaudient, clairvoyance, psychic, trance*

**myth** Traditional story, usually ancient and of no known author, involving Gods, *devas* and heroes, and serving to illustrate great principles of life, customs, the origin of the universe, etc See *folk narratives, kathā*.

**mythology** Body of tales and legends All the myths of a specific people, culture or religion India’s mythology is among the world’s most bountiful See *folk narratives, kathā*.



**nāda** नाद “Sound, tone, vibration” Metaphysically, the mystic sounds of the Eternal, of which the highest is the transcendent or Soundless Sound, *Paranāda*, the first vibration from which creation emanates *Paranāda* is so pure and subtle that it cannot be identified to the denser regions of the mind From *Paranāda* comes *Pranava*, Aum, and further evolutes of *nāda* These are

experienced by the meditator as the *nādanādi śakti*, “the energy current of sound,” heard pulsing through the nerve system as a constant high-pitched hum, much like a *tambura*, an electrical transformer, a swarm of bees or a *śruti* box Listening to the inner sounds is a contemplative practice, called *nāda upāsana*, “worship through sound,” *nāda anusandhāna*, “cultivation of inner sound,” or *nāda yoga* The subtle variations of the *nādanādi śakti* represent the psychic wavelengths of established *guru* lineages of many Indian religions *Nāda* also refers to other psychic sounds heard during deep meditation, including those resembling various musical instruments Most commonly, *nāda* refers to ordinary sound See *Aum, nādi, pranava, sound*.

**nādanādi śakti** नादनाडीशक्ति “Energy current of sound.” See *nāda*

**nādi**. नाडी “Conduit” A nerve fiber or energy channel of the subtle (inner) bodies of man It is said there are 72,000 These interconnect the *chakras* The three main *nādis* are named *idā*, *pingalā* and *sushumnā*. —*idā*. Also known as *chandra* (“moon”) *nādi*, it is pink in color and flows downward, ending on the left side of the body This current is feminine in nature and

- is the channel of physical-emotional energy —*pingalā* Also known as *sūrya* ("sun") *nādi*, it is blue in color and flows upward, ending on the right side of the body This current is masculine in nature and is the channel of intellectual-mental energy —*sushumnā* The major nerve current which passes through the spinal column from the *mūlādhāra chakra* at the base to the *sahasrāra* at the crown of the head It is the channel of *kundalinī* Through *yoga*, the *kundalinī* energy lying dormant in the *mūlādhāra* is awakened and made to rise up this channel through each *chakra* to the *sahasrāra chakra* See *chakra*, *kundalinī*, *rāja yoga*, *tantrism*
- nāga* नाग "Snake," often the cobra, symbol of the *kundalinī* coiled on the four petals of the *mūlādhāra chakra* See *kundalinī*, *mūlādhāra chakra*
- naivedya* नैवेद्य Food offered to the Deity at the temple or home altar An important element in *pūjā*. See *prasāda*, *pūjā*
- nakshatra*. नक्षत्र "Star cluster" Central to astrological determinations, the *nakshatras* are 27 star-clusters, constellations, which lie along the ecliptic, or path of the sun An individual's *nakshatra*, or birth star, is the constellation the moon was aligned with at the time of birth See *jyotisha*
- Nalvar* நாலவர் "Four devout beings" Four renowned saints of the Śaiva religion (7th to 9th century) Appar, Sundarar, Sambandar and Manikkavasagar—devotional mystics whose lives and teachings helped catalyze a resurgence of Śaivism in Tamil Nadu All but Manikkavasagar are among the Nayanars, 63 saints canonized by Sekkilar in his *Periyapurānam* (ca 1140) These four are also known as the Samayāchāryas, "teachers of the faith" Their devotional poems are embodied in the *Tirumurai*, along with the writings of other Nayanars Numerous South Indian temples celebrate their historic pilgrimages from shrine to shrine where they beseeched the grace of Śiva through heartfelt song *Nalvar* is a term not to be confused with *Alvar*, naming certain Vaishnava saints of the same period See *Alvar*, *Nayanar*, *Tirumurai*
- nāmadikshā*. नामदीक्षा "Name initiation" Also known as *nāmakarana samskāra*. See *samskāras of childhood*.
- Namah Śivāya* नम शिवाय "Adoration (or homage) to Śiva" The supreme *mantra* of Śaivism, known as the *Pañchākshara* or "five letters" *Na* is the Lord's veiling grace, *Ma* is the world, *Śi* is Śiva, *Vā* is His revealing grace, *Ya* is the soul The letters also represent the physical body *Na* the legs, *Ma* the stomach, *Śi* the shoulders, *Vā* the mouth and *Ya* the eyes Embodying the essence of Śaiva Siddhānta, it is found in the center of the central *Veda* (the *Yajur*) of the original three *Vedas* (*R̥ig*, *Yajur* and *Sāma*) *Namastārāya namah śambhave cha mayobhave cha, namah śankarāya cha mayaskarāya cha, namah śivāya cha śivayatarāya cha* "Homage to the source of health and to the source of delight Homage to the maker of health and to the maker of delight Homage to the Auspicious, and to the more Auspicious" (*Kṛishna Yajur Veda*, *Taittirīya Samhitā* 4 5 8) See *mantra*, *japa*.



**nāmakarana.** नामकरण "Name giving" See *samskāras of childhood*

**namaskāra** नमस्कार "Reverent salutations" Traditional Hindu verbal greeting and *mudrā* where the palms are joined together and held before the heart or raised to the level of the forehead The *mudrā* is also called *añjali* It is a devotional gesture made equally before a temple Deity, holy person, friend or momentary acquaintance The hands held together connects the right side of the body with the left, and brings the nerve and *nāḍī* currents into poised balance, into a consciousness of the *sushumnā*, awakening the third eye within the greeter to worship God in the greeted See *añjali mudrā*, *pranāma*

**namaste.** नमस्ते "Reverent salutations to you" A traditional verbal greeting A form of *namas*, meaning "bowing, obeisance" See *namaskāra*

**Namo Nārāyaṇāya.** नमो नारायणाय "Salutations to Lord Vishnu" The great *mantra* of the Vaishnava faith Also a popular greeting among Vaishnavites and Smārtas See *Vaishnavism*, *Vishnu*

**Nandi** नन्दि "The joyful" A white bull with a black tail, the *vāhana*, or mount, of Lord Śiva, symbol of the powerful instinctive force tamed by Him Nandi is the perfect devotee, the soul of man, kneeling humbly before God Śiva, ever concentrated on Him The ideal and goal of the Śiva *bhakta* is to behold Śiva in everything See *vāhana*

**Nandikeśvara** नन्दिकेश्वर "Lord of Nandi" A name of Śiva Also another name for Nandinātha, the first historically known *guru* of the Nandinātha Sampradāya See *Kailāsa Paramparā*, *Nātha Sampradāya*

**Nandikeśvara Kāśikā** नन्दिकेश्वरकाशिका The only surviving work of Nandikeśvara (ca 250 BCE) Its 26 verses are the earliest extant exposition of advaitic Śaivism, aside from the *Śaiva Āgamas*

**Nandinātha.** नन्दिनाथ A synonym of *Nandikeśvara*. See *Kailāsa Paramparā*

**Nandinātha Sampradāya.** नन्दिनाथसंप्रदाय See *Nātha Sampradāya*

**Nārada Sūtra(s)** नारदसूत्र A Vaishnava text of 84 aphorisms in which Sage Nārada explains *bhakti yoga* (ca 1200)

**Nārada Parivrājaka** नारदपरिव्राजक An *Upanishad* of the *Aṭharva Veda* which teaches of asceticism, *sannyāsa*, true *brāhminhood*, and more

**Naraka** नरक Abode of darkness Literally, "pertaining to man" The lower worlds Equivalent to the Western term *hell*, a gross region of the *Antar-loka* Naraka is a congested, distressful area where demonic beings and young souls may sojourn until they resolve the darksome *karmas* they have created Here beings suffer the consequences of their own misdeeds in previous lives *Naraka* is understood as having seven regions, called *tala*, corresponding to the states of consciousness of the seven lower *chakras* as follows 1) Put, "childless"—*atala chakra*, "wheel of the bottomless region" Fear and lust (located in the hips) 2) Avīchi, "joyless"—*vitala chakra* "wheel of negative region" Center of anger (thighs) 3) Samhāta, "abandoned"—*sutala chakra* "Great depth" Region of jealousy (knees) 4) Tāmisra, "dark-

ness"—*talātala chakra* "wheel of the lower region" Realm of confused thinking (calves) 5) *Rijisha*, "expelled"—*rasātala chakra* "wheel of subterranean region" Selfishness (ankles) 6) *Kudmala*, "leprous"—*mahātala chakra* "wheel of the great lower region" Region of consciencelessness (feet) The intensity of "hell" begins at this deep level 7) *Kākola*, "black poison"—*pātāla chakra*, "wheel of the fallen or sinful level" Region of malice (soles of the feet)

The seven-fold hellish region in its entirety is also called *pātāla*, "fallen region" Scriptures offer other lists of hells, numbering 7 or 21 They are described as places of torment, pain, darkness, confusion and disease, but none are places where souls reside forever Hinduism has no eternal hell See *hell*, *loka*, *purgatory* (also, individual *tala* entries)

**Narasinha Pūrvatāpanīya** नरसिंहपूर्वतापनीय "The ascetic's surrender to Narasinha (incarnation of Vishnu as half-man, half-lion)" An *Upanishad* of the *Atharva Veda* which deals with worship of Vishnu

**Nārāyaṇa** नारायण "Abode of men" A name of Lord Vishnu See *Vishnu*

**Nārāyanakantha** नारायणकण्ठ Great exponent of Śaiva Siddhānta (ca 1050)

**nāstika** नास्तिक "One who denies, unbeliever" Opposite of *āstika*, "one who asserts" The terms *āstika* (orthodox) and *nāstika* (unorthodox) are a traditional classification of Indian schools of thought *Nāstika* refers to all traditions that reject and deny the scriptural authority of the *Vedas* This includes Sikhism, Jainism, Buddhism, the Chārvāka materialists and others *Āstika* refers to those schools that accept the revealed authority of the *Vedas* as supreme scripture This includes the four major sects Śaivism, Śāktism, Vaiṣṇavism and Smārtism See *atheism*, *Chārvāka*, *materialism*

**Naṭarāja** नटराज "King of Dance, or King of Dancers" God as the Cosmic Dancer Perhaps Hinduism's richest and most eloquent symbol, Naṭarāja represents Śiva, the Primal Soul, Parameśvara, as the power, energy and life of all that exists This is Śiva's intricate state of Being in Manifestation The dance of Śiva as Naṭeśa, Lord of Dancers, is the dance of the entire cosmos, the rhythmic movements in all All that is, whether sentient or insentient, pulsates in His body Naṭarāja is art and spirituality in perfect oneness, chosen to depict the Divine because in dance that which is created is inseparable from its creator, just as the universe and soul cannot be separated from God Naṭarāja is also stillness and motion wrought together The stillness speaks of the peace and poise that lies within us all, at the center The intense motion, depicted by His hair flying wildly in all directions, is an intimation of the fury and ferocity, the violent vigor, which fills this universe wherein we dwell The implication of these opposites is that God contains and allows them both, that there is divine purpose at work in our life, whether we find ourselves engaged in its beauty or its "madness" Dance and dancer are one, not an atom moves on any plane of existence but by His Will Thus, this elegant symbol embodies the underlying unity of all

Śiva's Dance, or all that happens, is composed of an ever-flowing combination of His five potent actions, *pañchakṛitya* 1) *srīṣṭi* creation, or emanation, represented by His upper right hand and the *damaru* (drum), upon which he beats *Paranāda*, the Primal Sound from which issue forth the rhythms and cycles of creation, 2) *sthiti* preservation, represented by His lower right hand in a gesture of blessing, *abhaya mudrā*, saying "fear not," 3) *samhāra* destruction, dissolution or absorption, represented by the fire in His upper left hand, posed in *ardhachandra mudrā*, "half-moon gesture," 4) *tirobhāva* obscuring grace, the power which hides the truth, thereby permitting experience, growth and eventual fulfillment of destiny, represented by His right foot upon the prostrate person (*Apasmārapurusha*), the principle of ignorance, or *ānava*, 5) *anugraha* revealing grace—which grants knowledge and severs the soul's bonds—represented by Śiva's raised left foot, and by His lower left hand, held in *gajahasta* ("elephant trunk") *mudrā*, inviting approach These five cosmic activities are sometimes personalized respectively as *Brahmā*, *Vishnu*, *Rudra*, *Maheśvara* and *Sadāśiva*—or as *Sadyojāta* (creation), *Vāmadeva* (preservation), *Aghora* (reabsorption), *Tatpurusha* (obscuration) and *Īśāna* (granting grace)

The ring of fire (*prabhāmandala*), in which Śiva dances is the hall of consciousness, *chitsabhā*, in other words, the light-filled heart of man, the central chamber of the manifest cosmos Śiva dances the universe into and out of existence, veiling Ultimate Reality for most, unveiling it for devotees who draw near and recognize *Paraśiva*, Ultimate Reality, in the chamber of their own inner being Yea, all are dancing with Śiva. See *nāda*, *Paramēśvara*, *Parāśakti*, *Paraśiva*, *Sadāśiva*

**Natchintanaḥ** நஞ்சிந்தனை The collected songs of Sage Yogaswāmī (1872–1964) of Jaffna, Sri Lanka, extolling the power of the *satguru*, worship of Lord Śiva, the path of *dharma* and the attainment of Self Realization See *Kailāsa Paramparā*

**Nātha** नाथ "Master, lord, adept" Names an ancient Himalayan tradition of Śaiva-yoga mysticism, whose first historically known exponent was Nandikeśvara (ca 250 BCE) *Nātha*—Self-Realized adept—refers to the extraordinary ascetic masters of this school Through their practice of *siddha yoga* they have attained tremendous powers, *siddhis*, and are sometimes referred to as *siddha yogīs* (accomplished or fully enlightened ones) The words of such beings naturally penetrate deeply into the psyche of their devotees, causing mystical awakenings Like all *tantrics*, *Nāthas* have refused to recognize caste distinctions in spiritual pursuits Their *satgurus* initiate from the lowest to the highest, according to spiritual worthiness *Nātha* also refers to any follower of the *Nātha* tradition The *Nāthas* are considered the source of *haṭha* as well as *rāja yoga* See *Kailāsa Paramparā*, *Nātha Sampradāya*, *siddha yoga*

**Nātha Matha.** नाथमठ "Adepts' monastery" As a proper noun, a synonym for

**Siddha Siddhānta** See *Siddha Siddhānta*

**Nātha Sampradāya** नाथसंप्रदाय "Traditional doctrine of knowledge of masters" *Sampradāya* means a living stream of tradition or theology Nātha Sampradāya is a philosophical and *yogic* tradition of Śaivism whose origins are unknown This oldest of Śaivite *sampradāyas* existing today consists of two major streams the Nandinātha and the Ādinātha The Nandinātha Sampradāya has had as exemplars Maharishi Nandinātha and his disciples Patañjali (author of the *Yoga Sūtras*) and Tirumular (author of *Tirumantiram*) Among its representatives today are the successive *siddhars* of the Kailāsa Paramparā The Ādinātha lineage's known exemplars are Maharishi Ādinātha, Matsyendranātha and Gorakshanātha, who founded a well-known order of *yogīs* See *Kailāsa Paramparā*, *Nātha*, *Śaivism*, *sampradāya*

**Nayanar** நாயனார் "Teacher" The 63 canonized Tamil saints of South India, as documented in the *Periyapurānam* by Sekkilar (ca 1140) All but a few were householders, recognized as outstanding exemplars of devotion to Lord Śiva Several contributed to the Śaiva Siddhānta scriptural compendium called *Tirumurai* See *Nalvar*, *Tirumurai*

**neo-Indian religion**· *Navabhārata Dharma* A modern form of liberal Hinduism that carries forward basic Hindu cultural values—such as dress, diet and the arts—while allowing religious values to subside It emerged after the British Raj, when India declared itself an independent, secular state It was cultivated by the Macaulay education system, implanted in India by the British, which aggressively undermined Hindu thought and belief Neo-Indian religion encourages Hindus to follow any combination of theological, scriptural, *sādhana* and worship patterns, regardless of sectarian or religious origin Extending out of and beyond the Smārta system of worshipping the Gods of each major sect, it incorporates holy icons from all religions, including Jesus, Mother Mary and Buddha Many Navabhāratīs choose to not call themselves Hindus but to declare themselves members of all the world's religions See *pañchāyatana pūjā*, *Smārtism*, *Smārta Sampradāya*, *syncretism*, *universalist*

**Nepāl**: नेपाल Ancient land between India and Tibet—50,000 square miles, population 14 million It was the birthplace of Buddha and Sāta, the original home of Matsyendranātha and is renowned for its Pāśupatinātha Śiva temple Hinduism is the state religion

**neti neti**. नेति नेति "Not this, not that." An Upanishadic formula connoting, through negation, the undefinable and inconceivable nature of the Absolute It is an affirmation which the meditating *yogī* applies to each thought and phase of the mind as he penetrates deeper and deeper in his quest for Truth Ultimately he transcends all "this-ness" to realize That which is beyond the mind See *kundalinī*, *samādhi*, *rāja yoga*.

**neuter**· Having no sex or gender

**neutron star**· A star which has collapsed in on itself and is extremely dense

A neutron star the size of an orange would weigh more than the entire earth  
**new age** According to *Webster's New World Dictionary* "Of or pertaining to a cultural movement popular in the 1980s [and 90s] characterized by a concern with spiritual consciousness, and variously combining belief in reincarnation and astrology with such practices as meditation, vegetarianism and holistic medicine"

**New Year** The majority of Hindus in India celebrate the New Year according to traditional, pre-colonial calendars, several of which are still in use There are, therefore, various New Year's days in different states of India, the two major ones being *Dīpāvalī* in October-November, observed in North India, and the day when the sun enters *Mesha* (Aries) in April, celebrated in Tamil Nadu, Bengal and Nepal

**Nimbārka** निम्बार्क Mystic, philosopher and founder of the Minandi Vaishnava school of Vedānta (ca 1150) He acclaimed the *guru's* grace as the only true means to salvation See *Vedānta*.

**Nirguna Brahman** निर्गुणब्रह्म "God without qualities" See *Brahman*  
**Nirukta Vedāṅga**. निरुक्तवेदाङ्ग "Etymology *Veda-lumb*" Auxiliary Vedic texts which discuss the origin and development of words, among the four linguistic skills taught for mastery of the *Vedas* and the rites of *yajña* *Nirukta* relies upon ancient lexicons, *nighaṇṭu*, as well as detailed hymn indices, *anukramanī* Five *nighaṇṭus* existed at the time of Yāska (320 BCE), whose treatise is regarded a standard work on Vedic etymology See *Vedāṅga*.

**nirvahana**. निर्वहण "End, completion" Conclusion

**nirvānī and upadeśī**. निर्वणी उपदेशी *Nirvānī* means "extinguished one," and *upadeśī* means "teacher" In general, *nirvānī* refers to a liberated soul, or to a certain class of monk *Upadeśī* refers to a teacher, generally a renunciate In *Dancing with Śiva*, these two terms have special meaning, similar to the Buddhist *arhat* and *bodhisattva*, naming the two earthly modes of the realized, liberated soul After full illumination, the *jīvanmukta* has the choice to return to the world to help others along the path This is the way of the *upadeśī* (akin to *bodhisattva*), exemplified by the benevolent *satguru* who leads seekers to the goal of God Realization He may found and direct institutions and monastic lineages The *nirvānī* (akin to *arhat*) abides at the pinnacle of consciousness, shunning all worldly involvement He is typified by the silent ascetic, the reclusive sage See. *satguru*, *viśvagrāsa*

**nirvikalpa samādhi** निर्विकल्पसमाधि "Enstasy (*samādhi*) without form or seed" The realization of the Self, Paraśiva, a state of oneness beyond all change or diversity, beyond time, form and space *Vi* means "to change, make different" *Kalpa* means "order, arrangement, a period of time" Thus *vikalpa* means "diversity, thought, difference of perception, distinction" *Nir* means "without" See *enstasy*, *kalpa*, *rāja yoga*, *samādhi*

**nīśchītārtha** निश्चितार्थ "Engagement (to be married), resolution of aim" Synonym for *vāgdāna* See *marriage covenant*, *samskāras of adulthood*

*nivedana* निवेदन "Announcement" The dedication of a book

*niyama* नियम "Restraint" See *yama-miyama*

*nyati* नियति "Necessity, restriction, the fixed order of things, destiny" A synonym for *karma*, *nyati* is the eighth *tattva*. It is part of the soul's five-fold "sheath," *pañcha kañchuka* (or *viññānamaya kośa*), along with *kāla* (time), *kalā* (creativity), *vidyā* (knowing) and *rāga* (attachment, desire). The soul thus encased is called *purusha*. See *karma*, *tattva*.

nondual (nondualism) See *dvaita-advaita*, *monistic theism*, *Vedānta*

nonhuman birth The phenomenon of the soul being born as an animal or other nonhuman life forms during the course of its reincarnational cycles, explained in various Hindu scriptures. For example, Saint Manikkavasagar's famous hymn (*Tiruvasagan* 8 14) "I became grass and herbs, worm and tree. I became many beasts, bird and snake. I became stone and man, goblins and sundry celestials. I became mighty demons, silent sages and the Gods. Taken form in life, moveable and immovable, born in all, I am weary of birth, my Great Lord." The *Upanishads*, too, contain similar references, describing the soul's course after death and later taking a higher or lower birth according to its merit or demerit of the last life (*Kaushītaki Upanishad* 1 2, *Chandogya Upanishad* 5 3–5 10, *Bṛihadāranyaka Upanishad* 6 2).

These statements are sometimes misunderstood to mean that each soul must slowly, in sequential order incarnate as successively higher beings, beginning with the lowest organism, to finally obtain a human birth. In fact, as the *Upanishads* explain, after death the soul, reaching the inner worlds, reaps the harvest of its deeds, is tested and then takes on the appropriate incarnation—be it human or nonhuman—according to its merit or demerit. Souls destined for human evolution are human-like from the moment of their creation in the *Śivaloka*. This is given outer expression in the *Antarloka* and *Bhūloka*, on earth or other similar planets, as the appropriate sheaths are developed. However, not all souls are human souls. There are many kinds of souls, such as genies, elementals and certain Gods, who evolve toward God through different patterns of evolution than do humans.

One cause of unclarity is to confuse the previously mentioned scriptural passages with the theory of biological evolution developed by Charles Darwin (1809–1882), which states that plant and animal species develop or evolve from earlier forms due to hereditary transmission of variations that enhance the organism's adaptability and chances of survival. These principles are now considered the kernel of biology. Applying this theory to man, modern scientists argue that the human form is the result of the development of earlier primates, including apes and monkeys. The Darwinian theory is reasonable but necessarily incomplete as it is based in a materialistic conception of reality that does not encompass the existence of the soul. While the Upanishadic evolutionary vision speaks of the individual soul's development and progress through reincarnation, the Darwinian theory

- focuses on evolution of the biological organism, with no relation to a soul or individual being See *evolution of the soul, kośa, reincarnation, soul.*
- noninjurious** Which does not cause harm or injury — **noninjuriousness** A translation of *ahimsā*, the principle of not causing harm or injury to living beings, whether by thought, word or deed See *ahimsā.*
- nonperseverance** The act, practice or attitude of not persisting, giving up too easily See *yama-niyama*
- nonviolence.** See *ahimsā.*
- Northern Śaivism** A name for Kashmir Śaivism See. *Kashmīr Śaivism.*
- notable.** Worthy of being noted Remarkable
- novelty** Newness The constant changes and enchantments of life
- novitiate** Same as *novice.* A newcomer to a monastic or religious community, on probation, before taking final vows
- nucleus of the soul** See *ātman, impersonal being, soul.*
- nunk.** A contemporary word coined by Catholic theologian Raimundo Panikkar to describe women contemplatives or female monks, in contrast to the word *nun* which commonly describes a religious teacher or service-oriented woman under vows A nunk is a celibate woman following strict, perhaps austere and usually solitary, spiritual disciplines and lifestyle By balancing the masculine and feminine energies within herself through *sādhana* and *yoga*, she is a complete being, detached from the thoughts and feelings of others, free to follow the contemplative and mystical life in pursuit of the Self within To accomplish this, she works to permanently conquer her feminine instincts and the emotional tendencies of a woman's body She strives to transmute her sexuality into the Divine, giving up her womanliness so thoroughly that she is indistinguishable from a monk. In Hinduism, nunks may be *sannyāsinīs, yoginīs* or *sādhikās* See *monastic, sannyāsin, monk.*
- nurturance** Same as nurture, to nourish The act or process or furnishing the essentials to growth, development or education
- Nyāya.** न्याय "System, rule, logic" See *Gautama, śhaḍ darśana.*



**objective** 1) Quality of thinking or perception relating to the object as it truly is Not biased or colored by one's personal point of view or prejudices, which then would be subjective thinking 2) A target, goal or anything sought for or aimed at Cf *subjective.*

**oblation** An offering or sacrifice ceremoniously given to a God or guru See *sacrifice, yajña.*

**obscuration** Same as obscuring grace See. *grace, Naṭarāja.*

**obscuring grace** See *grace, Naṭarāja*

**obstacle.** See *upasarga.*

**obstinate (obstinacy)** Overly determined to have one's own way Stubborn

**occult.** Hidden, or kept secret, revealed only after initiation See *mysticism*  
**odic:** Magnetic—of or pertaining to consciousness within *āsuddha māyā*, the realm of the physical and lower astral planes Odic force in its rarified state is *prakṛiti*, the primary gross energy of nature, manifesting in the three *gunas sattva, rajas* and *taṃas* It is the force of attraction and repulsion between people, people and their things, and manifests as masculine (aggressive) and feminine (passive), arising from the *piṅgalā* and *idā* currents These two currents (*uādi*) are found within spine of the subtle body Odic force is a magnetic, sticky, binding substance that people seek to develop when they want to bind themselves together, such as in partnerships, marriage, *guru-śiṣya* relationships and friendships Odic energy the combined emanation of the *prāṇamaya* and *annamaya kośas* The term *odic* is the adjective form of *od* (pronounced like *mode*), defined in the *Oxford English Dictionary* as “a hypothetical force held by Baron von Reichenbach (1788–1869) to pervade all nature, manifesting itself in certain persons of sensitive temperament (streaming from their fingertips), and exhibited especially by magnets, crystals, heat, light and chemical action, it has been held to explain the phenomena of mesmerism and animal magnetism”

See *actinic, actimodic, guna, kosa, odic, subtle body, tattva*

**offset.** Made up for, compensated for, counterbalanced by

**offspring.** The young of animals Children Sanskrit *apatya*

**olaḥ** ओल “Leaf” An ancient form of Indian books used in South India, made of strips of fronds from the palmyra (*tṛiṇḍruma*) and talipot (*tālapatra*, “fan-leaf”) palms Prepared birch bark (*bhūrja patra*) was the medium in the North The pages were loosely tied, with cord passed between one or two holes and usually bound between wooden covers Ink, made from lampblack or charcoal, was applied with a reed pen Or, more commonly in the South, the letters were scribed with a stylus, then rubbed with powdered lampblack These books are small in size, averaging about 2 inches high and 8 inches wide and up to 11 or 12 inches thick, wound with string and generally protected in colored cloth See *grantha*

**old soul** One who has reincarnated many times, experienced much and is therefore further along the path Old souls may be recognized by their qualities of compassion, self-effacement and wisdom See *evolution of the soul, soul*

**Om** ओम् “Yes, verily” The most sacred *mantra* of Hinduism An alternate transliteration of *Aum* (the sounds A and U blend to become O) See *Aum*

**ominous** Foreboding, frightening, sinister

**omnipotent.** All-powerful Able to do anything

**omnipresent:** Present everywhere and in all things

**omniscient.** Having infinite knowledge, all-knowing

**oneness** Quality or state of being one Unity, identity, especially in spite of appearances to the contrary—e g, the oneness of soul and God See. *monism*



**ontology** The branch of metaphysics dealing with the nature of reality  
**orbit** The path taken by a celestial object gravitating around another  
**ordain (ordination)** To give someone the duties and responsibilities, authority and spiritual power of a religious office, such as priest, minister or *satguru*, through religious ceremony or mystical initiation See *dikshā*  
**original sin** See *sin*  
**orthodox** "Straight opinion" Conforming to established doctrines or beliefs Opposite of *heterodox*, "different opinion" See *āstika*.  
**outgrow (outgrown)** To grow faster or larger than and, therefore, to lose or be rid of in the process of growing  
**outstretch** To extend, to stretch out, as one's arms or a large cloth  
**overshadow** To cast a shadow over or be more important than, to dominate  
**overwhelm** To overcome or overpower as with great force or emotion



**pada** पद "A step, pace, stride, footstep, trace"  
**pāda** पाद "The foot (of men and animals), quarter-part, section, stage, path" Names the major sections of the Āgamic texts and the corresponding stages of practice and unfoldment on the path to *moksha* According to Śaiva Siddhānta, there are four *pādas*, which are successive and cumulative, i e in accomplishing each one the soul prepares itself for the next (In Tamil, Śaiva Siddhānta is also known as Nalu-pāda, "four-stage," Śaivism )—**charyā pāda** "Good conduct stage" The first stage where one learns to live righteously, serve selflessly, performing *karma yoga* It is also known as *dāsa mārگا*, "path of the slave," a time when the aspirant relates to God as a servant to a master Traditional acts of *charyā* include cleaning the temple, lighting lamps and collecting flowers for worship Worship at this stage is mostly external — **kriyā pāda**. "Religious action, worship stage" Stage of *bhakti yoga*, of cultivating devotion through performing *pūjā* and regular daily *sādhana*. It is also known as the *satputra mārگا*, "true son's way," as the soul now relates to God as a son to his father A central practice of the *kriyā pāda* is performing daily *pūjā*. —**yoga pāda** Having matured in the *charyā* and *kriyā pādas*, the soul now turns to internalized worship and *rāja yoga* under the guidance of a *satguru*. It is a time of *sādhana* and serious striving when realization of the Self is the goal It is the *sakhā mārگا*, "way of the friend," for now God is looked upon as an intimate friend —**jñāna pāda** "Stage of wisdom" Once the soul has attained Realization, it is henceforth a wise one, who lives out the life of the body, shedding blessings on mankind This stage is also called the San Mārگا, "true path," on which God is our dearest beloved The *Tirumantiram* describes the fulfillment of each stage as follows In *charyā*, the soul forges a kindred tie in "God's world" (*sālokya*) In *kriyā* it attains "nearness" (*sāmīpya*) to Him In *yoga* it attains

- "likeness" (*sārūpya*) with Him In *jñāna* the soul enjoys the ultimate bliss of identity (*sāyujya*) with Śiva See *jñāna*, *nirvāṇi* and *upadeśi*
- pādapūjā** पादपूजा "Foot worship" Ceremonial worship of the guru's sandals or holy feet, often through ablution with precious substances and offering of fruit and flowers After the ceremony, the water of the bath, the fruit and other precious substances are partaken of as *prasāda* by the devotees See *guru*, *guru bhakti*, *pādukā*, *prasāda*, *ucchishṭa*
- padārtha** पदार्थ "Constituent substance" Primary categories or essential elements of existence, defined differently or uniquely by each philosophical school For example, in the Sāṅkhya Darśana, the *padārthas* are *purusha* (spirit) and *prakṛiti* (matter) According to Advaita Vedānta, they are *chit* (spirit) and *achit* (nonspirit), which from an absolute perspective are taken as the One *padārtha*, Brahman In Śākta and Śaiva traditions, the *padārthas* are Pati (God), *paśu* (soul) and *pāśa* (world, or bonds)
- paddhati** पद्धति "Foot-path, track, guide" The name of a class of expository writings, e g , Gorakshanātha's *Siddha Siddhānta Paddhati*, and the many *paddhatīs* that are guidebooks for ritual temple rites There are *paddhatīs* for the *Vedas* and for the *Āgamas*
- padma** पद्म The lotus flower, *Nelumbo nucifera*, symbol of spiritual development and the *chakras* Because it grows out of mud and rises to perfect purity and glory, it is an apt representation of spiritual unfoldment.
- Padma Purāna**, पद्मपुराण One of the six main *Vishnu Purānas*
- pādukā** पादुका "Sandals" Śrī *Pādukā* refers to the sandals of the preceptor, the traditional icon of the *guru*, representing his holy feet and worshiped as the source of grace *Pādukā* also names one of Vira Śaivism's eight aids (*aṣṭāvarana*) to faith—the practice of drinking the water from the ceremonial washing of the Śivalinga or the guru's feet See *guru bhakti*, *pādapūjā*, *prasāda*, *satguru*, *ucchishṭa*.
- pagan** Term used negatively by Semitic faiths to indicate a follower of another religion, or of no religion Also names the pre-Christian religion of Europe, akin to shamanism and other of the world's indigenous faiths, which have survived to this day despite organized persecution Pagans are gradually surfacing again, and have acknowledged their kinship with Hinduism See *mysticism*, *shamanism*
- pageantry** A spectacular and grand representation, elaborately decorated show, procession, drama, etc See *festival*
- Paṅgala Upaniṣad** पैङ्गल उपनिषद् Belongs to the *Śukla Yajur Veda* A 12-verse dialog between Sage Yājñavalkya and his disciple Paṅgala covering a wide range of topics, including liberation and the five sheaths of man
- pañchabhūta** पञ्चभूत "Five elements" Earth, water, fire, air and ether Also called *mahābhūta*. See *indriya*, *tattva*
- pañchāchāra** पञ्चाचार "Five rules" The five Vira Śaivite codes of conduct. —*Lingāchāra* Daily worship of the Śivalinga —*sadāchāra* attention to

vocation and duty —*Śivāchāra* Acknowledging Śiva as the one God and observing equality among members —*bhṛtyāchāra* Humility toward all creatures —*ganāchāra* defense of the community and its tenets

***Pañcha Ganapati Utsava*** पञ्चगणपतिउत्सव “Five-fold Ganapati festival” A modern five-day festival observed from the 21st through 25th of December *Pañcha* (five) denotes Ganeśa’s five faces, each representing a specific power (*śakti*) One face is worshiped each day, creating 1) harmony in the home, 2) concord among relatives, neighbors and friends, 3) good business and public relations, 4) cultural upliftment and 5) heartfelt charity and religiousness The festival, a favorite among children, was conceived in 1985 by Satguru Sivaya Subramuniyaswami along with elders of various Hindu sects It is a time of sharing gifts, renewing ties of family and friendship while focusing inwardly on this great God of abundance See *Ganeśa*.

***Pañchākshara Mantra*** पञ्चाक्षरमन्त्र “Five-lettered chant” Śaivism’s most sacred *mantra*. See *Namah Śivāya*.

***Pañchamukha Ganapati*** पञ्चमुखगणपति “Five-faced Ganapati” A special form of Lord Ganeśa with five faces, similar to Siddhi Ganapati

***pañcha nitya karma(s)*** पञ्चनित्यकर्म “Five constant duties” A traditional regimen of religious practice for Hindus 1) *dharma* (virtuous living), 2) *upāsana* (worship), 3) *utsava* (holy days), 4) *tīrthayātrā* (pilgrimage) and 5) *samskāras* (sacraments) See *dharma*, *festival*, *samskāra*, *tīrthayātrā*.

***Pañcharātra*** पञ्चरात्र An ancient name of Vaishnavism The term literally means “five nights,” but may be a corruption of *pañcharatha* (“five vehicles, ways or paths”), thought to indicate five ancient sects in the vicinity of Mathura that eventually merged into one with the worship of Kṛishna

***Pāñcharātra Āgama(s)*** पाञ्चरात्र आगम The most popular of the two major groups of *Vaishnava Āgamas* (the other being the *Vaikāsana Āgamas*)

***Pañchārtha Bhāṣya*** पञ्चार्थभाष्य Commentary by Kaundinya (ca 100) on Lakuliśa’s *Pāśupata Sūtras*, one of the few extant philosophical texts of Pāśupata Śaivism It was rediscovered in 1930 See *Pāśupata Śaivism*

***pañcha śraddhā*** पञ्चश्रद्धा “Five faiths” A concise summary of Hindu belief exactly correlated to the “five constant practices,” *pañcha nitya karmas* The *pañcha śraddhā* are 1) *sarva* Brahman God is All in all, soul is divine, 2) *mandira* belief in temples and divine beings, 3) *karma*, cosmic justice, 4) *samsāra–moksha* rebirth brings enlightenment and liberation, 5) *Vedas* and *satguru* the necessity of scripture and preceptor See *pañcha nitya karma*

***Pañchatantra*** पञ्चतन्त्र The collection of animal stories used by sage Vishnu Sharma to teach the king’s sons the “art of practical life” They were written down in Sanskrit in about 200 BCE, but existed previously as part of oral tradition The engaging stories have migrated all over the world to reappear in *Aesop’s Fables*, *Arabian Nights*, *Canterbury Tales* and in ancient Chinese and Japanese works See *folk-narratives*, *mythology*

*pañcāyatana pūjā* पञ्चायतनपूजा "Five-shrine worship" A system of personal worship, thought to have developed after the 7th century, in the Smārta *brāhminical* tradition, and which is now part of orthodox daily practice for Smārtas. The ritual involves the worship of five Deities: Vishnu, Śiva, Sūrya, Gaṇeśa and Śakti. The five are represented by small *mūrtis*, or by five kinds of stones, or by five marks drawn on the floor. One is placed in the center as the devotee's preferred God, *Ishṭa Devatā*, and the other four in a square around it. Kumāra, often added as a sixth Deity, is generally situated behind the *Ishṭa Devatā*. Philosophically, all are seen by Smārtas as equal reflections of the one Saguna Brahman, rather than as distinct beings. This arrangement is also represented in Smārta temples, with one in a central sanctum, and the others installed in smaller shrines. Each God may be worshiped in any of His/Her traditional aspects or incarnations, allowing for much variety (e.g., Śakti as Lakṣmī, Vishnu as Rāma, and Śiva as Bhairava). With the addition of the sixth Deity, Kumāra, the system is known as *shanmata*, "six-fold path." This system has laid the foundation for the modern secular or neo-Indian religion, in which Hindus freely add Jesus, mother Mary, Mohammed, Buddha or any other holy personage to their altars. This modern approach has no basis in traditional scripture of any kind. See *Ishṭa Devatā*, *neo-Indian religion*, *shanmata*, *sthāpanāchārya*, *Smārtism*.

*pandita*, पण्डित See *pundit*

*panentheism* "All-in-God doctrine" The view that the universe is part of the being of God, as distinguished from *pantheism* ("all-is-God doctrine"), which identifies God with the total reality. In contrast, panentheism holds that God pervades the world, but is also beyond it. He is immanent and transcendent, relative and Absolute. This embracing of opposites is called dipolar. For the panentheist, God is in all, and all is in God. Panentheism is the technical term for monistic theism. See *Advaita Īśvaravāda*, *dvaita-advaita*, *monistic theism*, *pantheism*.

*pantheism* "All-is-God doctrine" A term applied to a variety of philosophical positions in which God and the world are identical. To the pantheist, God is not a Personal Lord, nor a transcendent or formless Being, but is the totality of all existence, including universal laws, movement, matter, etc. See *monistic theism*, *panentheism*.

*pāpa* पाप "Wickedness, sin, crime" 1) Bad or evil 2) Wrongful action 3) Demerit earned through wrongdoing. *Pāpa* includes all forms of wrongdoing, from the simplest infraction to the most heinous crime, such as premeditated murder. Each act of *pāpa* carries its karmic consequence, *kāma-phala*, "fruit of action," for which scriptures delineate specific penance for expiation. Those who have awakened psychic sight can clearly see *pāpa* in the inner subconscious aura as a colorful, sticky, astral substance. *Pāpa* is seen as dark unrelated colors, whereas its counterpart, *puṇya*, is seen as

pastels The color arrangements are not unlike modern art murals *Pāpa* colors can produce disease, depression, loneliness and such, but can be dissolved through penance (*prāyaśchitta*), austerity (*tapas*) and good deeds (*sukṛityā*)

There are specific consequences, *karmaphala*, "fruit of action," that result from each type of transgression of *dharma*. For example, a man who steals from his neighbors creates a cosmic debt which may be repaid later by having his own possessions taken away There are also specific penances, *prāyaśchitta*, that can be performed for atonement and the accrual of *punya* (merit) to balance out the *pāpa*, the negative *karma* of the wrongful act. Such disciplines are provided in the various *Dharma Śāstras* and prescribed by knowing preceptors, *panditas*, *śāstrīs*, *swāmīs*, *yogīs* and village elders according to the *varna* and education of the individual

For example, the *Laws of Manu* give several types of penance for the crime of murder, including 1) making a forest hut and subsisting there on alms for twelve years and using a human skull as one's emblem, or 2) walking 100 *yojanas* (900 miles), while reciting the *Vedas*, eating little and remaining continent A contemporary example if a man fells a large healthy tree, he may atone by planting ten trees and ensuring that at least one grows to replace it

The degree of *pāpa* accrued from an action depends on various factors, including the *karma*, *dharma* and spiritual advancement of the individual, the intent or motivation, as well as the time and place of the action (for example, unvirtuous deeds carry great demerit when performed in holy places) *Pāpa* is the opposite of *punya* (merit, virtue) See *evil*, *karma*, *penance*, *punya*, *sin*

*pāpa-duhkha*. पापदुःख "Sin and suffering" See *karma*, *pāpa*, *sin*

*pāpman* पाप्मन् "Evil, sin" See *evil*, *pāpa*, *Satan*, *sin*

*para* पर "Supreme, beyond" A term referring to the highest dimension of whatever it precedes—as in *Paraśiva* or *Parabrahman* (Sometimes *parā*, as in *Parāśakti*)

*parable* A short, simple story illustrating a moral or religious principle

*Parabrahman* परब्रह्मन् "Supreme (or transcendent) God" A synonym for Nirguna Brahman, Absolute Reality, beyond time, form and space Same as *Paraśiva* See *Brahman*, *Paraśiva*.

*paradox*. "Side-by-side opinion or thought" An apparent contradiction according to conventional logic and reason

*Parākhyā Āgama*. पराख्य आगम A subsidiary Śaiva Āgamic text (*Upāgama*)

*parama*. परम "Highest, supreme" See *para*.

*paramaguru* परमगुरु "Senior preceptor" The *guru* of a disciple's *guru*.

*paramahansa* परमहंस "Supreme swan" From *hansa*, meaning swan or, more precisely, the high-flying Indian goose, *Anser Indicus* A class of liberated renunciates See *hansa*

**Paramātman** परमात्मन् "Supreme Self," or "transcendent soul" *Paraśiva*, Absolute Reality, the one transcendent Self of every soul Contrasted with *ātman*, which includes all three aspects of the soul *Paraśiva*, *Parāśakti* and *ānandamaya kośa* See *ātman*, *kośa*, *soul*

**Parameśvara** परमेश्वर "Supreme Lord or Ruler" God Śiva in the third perfection as Supreme Mahādeva, Śiva-Śakti, mother of the universe In this perfection as Personal, father-mother God, Śiva is a person—who has a body, with head, arms and legs, etc —who acts, wills, blesses, gives *darśana*, guides, creates, preserves, reabsorbs, obscures and enlightens In Truth, it is Śiva-Śakti who does all The term *Primal Soul*, *Paramapurusha*, designates *Parameśvara* as the original, uncreated soul, the creator of all other souls *Parameśvara* has many other names and epithets, including those denoting the five divine actions—*Sadāśiva*, the revealer; *Maheśvara*, the obscurer, *Brahmā*, the creator, *Vishnu* the preserver, and *Rudra* the destroyer See *Naṭarāja*, *Sadāśiva*

**paramparā** परपरा "Uninterrupted succession" A lineage See *guru param-parā*.

**parārtha pūjā** परार्थपूजा "Public liturgy and worship" See *pūjā*

**Parāśakti** पराशक्ति "Supreme power; primal energy" God Śiva's second perfection, which is impersonal, immanent, and with form—the all-pervasive, Pure Consciousness and Primal Substance of all that exists There are many other descriptive names for *Parāśakti*—*Satchidānanda* ("existence-consciousness-bliss"), light, silence, divine mind, superconsciousness and more *Parāśakti* can be experienced by the diligent *yogī* or meditator as a merging in, or identification with, the underlying oneness flowing through all form The experience is called *savikalpa samādhi* See *rāja yoga*, *Śakti*, *Satchidānanda*, *tattva*.

**Parāsamvid** परासविद् In *Siddha Siddhānta* the highest, transcendental state of Śiva A synonym of *Paraśiva*

**Paraśiva**. परशिव "Transcendent Śiva" The Self God, Śiva in His first perfection, Absolute Reality God Śiva as *That* which is beyond the grasp of consciousness, transcends time, form and space and defies description To merge with Him in mystic union is the goal of all incarnated souls, the reason for their living on this planet, and the deepest meaning of their experiences Attainment of this is called Self Realization or *nirvikalpa samādhi* See. *samādhi*, *Śiva*

**Pārvatī** पार्वती "Mountain's daughter" One of many names for the Universal Mother Prayers are offered to Her for strength, health and eradication of impurities Mythologically, *Pārvatī* is wedded to Śiva See *Goddess*, *Śakti*

**pāśa**: पाश "Tether; noose" The whole of existence, manifest and unmanifest. That which binds or limits the soul and keeps it (for a time) from manifesting its full potential *Pāśa* refers to the soul's three-fold bondage of *ānava*, *karma* and *māyā*. See *liberation*, *mala*, *Paṭi-paśu-pāśa*

**paśu** पशु “Cow, cattle, kine, fettered individual” Refers to animals or beasts, including man In philosophy, the soul Śiva as lord of creatures is called Paśupati See *pāśa*, *Patī-paśu-pāśa*

**paśupālaka** पशुपालक “Herdsman” A person who protects, nourishes and guards A name for a Hindu chaplain or missionary

**Pāśupata Śaivism** पाशुपतशैव Monistic and theistic, this school of Śaivism reveres Śiva as Supreme Cause and Personal Ruler of soul and world, denoted in His form as Paśupati, “Lord of souls” This school centers around the ascetic path, emphasizing *sādhana*, detachment from the world and the quest for “internal *kundalīnī* grace” The *Kāraṇa Māhātmya* recounts the birth of Lakulīśa (ca 200 BCE), a principal Pāśupata *guru*, and refers to the temple of Somanātha as one of the most important Pāśupata centers Lakulīśa propounded a Śaiva monism, though indications are that Pāśupata philosophy was previously dualistic, with Śiva as efficient cause of the universe but not material cause It is thought to be the source of various ascetic streams, including the Kāpālikas and the Kālāmukhas This school is represented today in the broad *sādhū* tradition, and numerous Pāśupata sites of worship are scattered across India. See *Śaivism*

**Pāśupata Sūtra(s)** पाशुपतसूत्र The recently rediscovered (1930) central scripture of the Pāśupata school of Śaivism, attributed to Lakulīśa It covers asceticism at great length, and the five subjects of Pāśupata theology effect, cause, meditation, behavior and dissolution of sorrow It urges the ascetic to go unrecognized and even invite abuse See *Pāśupata Śaivism*

**Paśupati** पशुपति “Herdsman, lord of animals” An ancient name for Śiva, first appearing in the *Atharva Veda* This form of Śiva, seated in *yogic* pose, was found on a seal from the 6,000-year-old Indus Valley civilization See *Pāśupata Śaivism*, *Śaivism*

**Pāśupatinātha mandira** पाशुपतिनाथमन्दिर Foremost temple of Nepal, linked to the ancient Pāśupata sect of Śaivism

**pātāla** पाताल “Fallen or sinful region” The seventh *chakra* below the *mūlādhāra*, centered in the soles of the feet Corresponds to the seventh and lowest astral netherworld beneath the earth’s surface, called Kākola (“black poison”) or Pātāla This is the realm in which misguided souls indulge in destruction for the sake of destruction, of torture, and of murder for the sake of murder *Pātāla* also names the netherworld in general, and is a synonym for *Naraka* See *chakra*, *loka*, *Naraka*

**Patañjali** पतञ्जलि A Śaivite Nātha *siddha* (ca 200 BCE) who codified the ancient *yoga* philosophy which outlines the path to enlightenment through purification, control and transcendence of the mind One of the six classical philosophical systems (*darśanas*) of Hinduism, known as Yoga Darśana His great work, the *Yoga Sūtras*, comprises 200 aphorisms delineating *aṣṭāṅga* (eight-limbed), *rāja* (kingly) or *siddha* (perfection) *yoga* Still today it is the foremost text on meditative *yoga*. See *Kailāsa Paramparā*, *rāja*

*yoga, shad darśana, yoga*

**path** *Mārga* or *panthā* A trail, road or way In Hinduism there are various ways that the term *path* is used —**path of enlightenment/salvation/moksha**. The way to the ultimate goals of Self Realization and liberation —**universal path**. The spiritual path conceived as being followed by all of existence, marching on its way to Godhood —**path of dharma**. Following principles of good conduct and virtue —**the two paths** The way of the monk and that of the householder, a choice to be made by each Hindu young man —**peerless/highest path** The spiritual path (or the path of renunciation) as the noblest of human undertakings —**the straight path** The way that goes directly to the goal, without distraction or *karmic* detour —**on the path** someone who is seriously studying, striving and performing *sādhana* to perfect the inner and outer nature —**our right path** in life. The best way for us personally to proceed, personal *dharma*, *svadharma*. —“Truth is one, paths are many.” Hinduism’s affirmation for tolerance It accepts that there are various ways to proceed toward the ultimate goal See *dharma, pāda*.

**pāthaka** पाठक “Reader, reciter” An inspired reader of scripture and sacred literature

**Patī** पति “Master, lord, owner” A name for God Śiva indicating His commanding relationship with souls as caring ruler and helpful guide In Śaiva Siddhānta the term is part of the analogy of cowherd (*patī*), cows (*paśu*, souls) and the tether (*pāśa*—*ānava*, *karma* and *māyā*) by which cows are tied See *Patī-paśu-pāśa, Śiva*

**Patī-paśu-pāśa** पति पशु पाश Literally “master, cow and tether” These are the three primary elements (*padārtha*, or *tattvatrayī*) of Śaiva Siddhānta philosophy God, soul and world—Divinity, man and cosmos—seen as a mystically and intricately interrelated unity *Patī* is God, envisioned as a cowherd *Paśu* is the soul, envisioned as a cow *Pāśa* is the all-important force or fetter by which God brings souls along the path to Truth The various schools of Hinduism define the rapport among the three in varying ways For pluralistic Śaiva Siddhāntins they are three beginningless verities, self-existent, eternal entities For monistic Śaiva Siddhāntins, *paśu* and *pāśa* are the emanational creation of *Patī*, Lord Śiva, and He alone is eternal reality See *pāśa, Śaiva Siddhānta, soul*.

**Paushkara Āgama** पौष्कर आगम Subsidiary text (*Upāgama*) of the *Matanga Paramesvara Śaiva Āgama*, containing 977 verses divided into 90 chapters A mostly philosophic treatise dealing with God, soul and world and the instruments of knowledge

**penance** *Prāyaścitta* Atonement, expiation An act of devotion (*bhakti*), austerity (*tapas*) or discipline (*sukṛitya*) undertaken to soften or nullify the anticipated reaction to a past action Penance is uncomfortable *karma* inflicted upon oneself to mitigate one’s *karmic* burden caused by wrongful



- actions (*kukarma*) It includes such acts as prostrating 108 times, fasting, self-denial, or carrying *kavadī* (*public penance*), as well as more extreme austerities, or *tapas* Penance is often suggested by spiritual leaders and elders Penitence or repentance, suffering regret for misdeeds, is called *anutaṭāpa*, meaning "to heat" See *evil*, *kavadī*, *pāpa*, *prāyaścitta*, *sin*, *tapas*
- pendant** An ornament or piece of jewelry attached to a necklace See *wedding pendant*
- perfections** Describes a quality, nature or dimension that is perfect God Śiva's three perfections are Paraśiva, Parāśakti and Parameśvara Though spoken of as three-fold for the sake of understanding, God Śiva ever remains a one transcendent-immanent Being See *Śiva*
- Periyapurāṇam** பெரிய புராணம் Twelfth book of the *Tirumurai* Story of the 63 Śaiva Nayanar saints of Tamil Nadu, written by Sekkilar (CA 1140) See *Tirumurai*
- personal dharma** *Svadharmā* An individual's unique path in life in conformance with divine law See *dharma*
- Personal God** See *Iṣṭa Devatā*, *Parameśvara*
- perspective** Point of view in understanding or evaluation
- pilgrimage** *Tīrthayātrā* Journeying to a holy temple, near or far, performed by all Hindus at least once each year See *tīrthayātrā*
- pinda** पिण्ड "Roundish mass, body, part of the whole, individual, microcosm" In worship rites, small balls of rice set aside daily in remembrance of ancestors Philosophically, and emphasized in Siddha Siddhānta, the human body as a replica of the macrocosm, *mahāsākāra pinda*, also called *Brahmānda* (cosmic egg), or simply *anda* (egg) Within the individual body of man is reflected and contained the entire cosmos Each *chakra* represents a world or plane of consciousness with the highest locus in the head and the lowest in the feet "Microcosm-macrocosm" is embodied in the terms *pinda-anda* *Siddha Siddhānta Paddhati* lists six *pindas*, from the *garbhapinda*, "womb-born body," to *parapinda*, "transcendental body" See *Brahmānda*, *microcosm-macrocosm*
- pingalā** पिंगला "Tawny channel" The masculine psychic current flowing along the spine See *kundalinī*, *nādī*, *rāja yoga*
- pīr** "Holy father" Muslim title for a religious leader, applied to leaders of a few Gorakshanātha monasteries
- pīṭha** पीठ "Seat, pedestal" 1) The base or pedestal of the Śivalinga, or of any Deity idol 2) A religious seat, such as the throne of the abbot of a monastery 3) An *aadheenam*, *āśrama* or *maṭha* established around such a seat of spiritual authority See *Śivalinga*
- Pitṛloka** पितृलोक "World of ancestors" The upper region of Bhuvanloka See *loka*
- pitta** पित्त "Bile, fire" One of the three bodily humors, called *doshas*, *pitta* is known as the fire humor It is the *āyurvedic* principle of bodily heat-energy

*Pitta dosha* governs nutritional absorption, body temperature and intelligence See *āyurveda, dosha*

**plague.** To distress, afflict, trouble or torment

**plane.** A stage or level of existence, e g , the causal plane (*Śivaloka*) See *loka*.

**Pleiades** A cluster of stars in the Taurus constellation, six of which are now visible from Earth This group of stars is known in Sanskrit as *Kṛttikā*, an important *nakshatra* for Lord Kārttikeya and believed to be this Deity's place of origin before He came to the star system of Earth See *Kārttikeya*

**pliant:** Flexible, adaptable, not rigid

**Plotinus** Egyptian-born philosopher (205–270), one of the Western world's greatest known mystics, who extended and revived the work of the Greek philosopher Plato in the Roman Empire His philosophy, known as Neo-Platonism, posits concentric levels of reality, not unlike the Hindu cosmology of *lokas*, with a central source of sublime existence and values and an outer sheath of physical matter Man, he said, is a microcosm of this system, capable of attaining the sublime inner state through ecstasy He practiced and taught *aḥimsā*, vegetarianism, *karma*, reincarnation and belief in Supreme Being as both immanent and transcendent His writings, in six volumes, are called the *Ennead* He was apparently familiar with Hindu wisdom through reading *Life of Apollonius*, a biography which narrated a young Greek renunciate's travels through India

**pluralism (pluralistic)** Doctrine that holds existence to be composed of three or more distinct and irreducible components, such as God, souls and world See *dvaita-advaita*

**pluralistic realism** A term for pluralism used by various schools including Meykandar Śaiva Siddhānta, emphasizing that the components of existence are absolutely real in themselves and not creations of consciousness or God

**polygamy:** Practice of having more than one spouse

**polytheism** Belief in or worship of many Gods See *monotheism*

**pomp** A dignified or brilliant display Splendor and pageantry

**pontifical** Having to do with pontiffs, or high priests Having all the dignity, respect, and influence of a spiritual leader endowed with great authority See *ordination, Śankarācārya pīṭha*

**potent.** Having power, authority Effective, able

**potentialities** A state of latency, something that has power but is not developed or manifest, such as a talent yet to be matured

**pradakṣiṇa.** प्रदक्षिण "Moving to the right" Worshipful circumambulation, walking clockwise around the temple sanctum or other holy place, with the intention of shifting the mind from worldly concerns to awareness of the Divine Clockwise has esoteric significance in that the *chakras* of *mūlādhāra* and above spin clockwise, while those below spin counterclockwise, taking one down into the lower regions of selfishness, greed, conflict and turmoil

**pradosha.** प्रदोष The auspicious 3-hour period, 1½ hours before and after



feet touch the ground (Same as *śaṣṭhāṅga prāṇāma*) —*pañchāṅga prāṇāma*: “Five-limbed obeisance” The woman’s form of prostration, in which the hands, head and legs touch the ground (with the ankles crossed, right over the left) A more exacting term for prostration is *pranipāta*, “falling down in obeisance” See *bhakti*, *namaskāra*, *prapatti*

*prāṇatyāga*. प्राणत्याग “Abandoning life force” A term for suicide but without the connotation of violence expressed in the more common terms *svadehaghāta*, “murdering one’s body,” and *ātmaghāta*, “self-murder” See *death*, *suicide*

*Pranava* प्रणव “Humming” The mantra *Aum*, denoting God as the Primal Sound It can heard as the sound of one’s own nerve system, like the sound of an electrical transformer or a swarm of bees The meditator is taught to inwardly transform this sound into the inner light which lights the thoughts, and bask in this blissful consciousness *Pranava* is also known as the sound of the *nādanādi śakti* See *Aum*, *Śiva Consciousness*

*prāṇāyāma*. प्राणायाम “Breath control” See *rāja yoga*

*prāṇic body* The subtle, life-giving sheath called *prāṇamaya kośa*. See *kośa*.

*prapatti* प्रपत्ति “Throwing oneself down” *Bhakti*—total, unconditional submission to God, often coupled with the attitude of personal helplessness, self-effacement and resignation A term especially used in Vaishnavism to name a concept extremely central to virtually all Hindu schools In Śaiva Siddhānta, *bhakti* is all important in the development of the soul and its release into spiritual maturity The doctrine is perhaps best expressed in the teachings of the four Samayāchārya saints, who all shared a profound and mystical love of Śiva marked by 1) deep humility and self-effacement, admission of sin and weakness, 2) total surrender in God as the only true refuge and 3) a relationship of lover and beloved known as bridal mysticism, in which the devotee is the bride and Śiva the bridegroom The practice of *yoga*, too, is an expression of love of God in Śaiva Siddhānta, and it is only with God’s grace that success is achieved Rishī Tirumular states “Unless your heart melts in the sweet ecstasy of love—my Lord, my treasure-trove, you can never possess” (*Tirumantiram* 272) It is in this concept of the need for self-effacement and total surrender, *prapatti*, that the members of all sects merge in oneness, at the fulfillment of their individual paths Similarly, they all meet in unity at the beginning of the path with the worship of Lord Ganeśa See *bhakti*, *grace*, *pāda*, *surrender*

*prārābdha karma*. प्रारब्धकर्म “Action that has been unleashed or aroused” See *karma*.

*prasāda*. प्रसाद “Clarity, brightness, grace” 1) The virtue of serenity and graciousness 2) Food offered to the Deity or the *guru*, or the blessed remnants of such food 3) Any propitiatory offering See *sacrament*, *Vira Śaivism*

*Praśna Upanishad*. प्रश्न उपनिषद् Belongs to the *Atharva Veda* and is divided into six sections addressing six questions asked of sage Pippalāda by his

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- personal aspect as Lord and Creator, depicted in many forms *Naṭarāja* by Śaivites, Vishnu by Vaishnavites, Devī by Śāktas See *Naṭarāja*, *Parameśvara*.
- Primal Sound** In Hinduism, sound is the first manifestation, even before light, in the creative scheme of things The Primal Sound is also known as *Pranava*, the sound of the *mula mantra*, "Aum" See *sound*
- Primal Substance** The fundamental energy and rarified form from which the manifest world in its infinite diversity is derived See *Parāśakti*
- principle** An essential truth, law or rule upon which others are based
- pristine** Pure, unspoiled, original condition
- procreation** The process of begetting offspring
- procurer** Provider
- progeny** Offspring, children, descendants
- prohibit (prohibition)** To forbid or prevent by authority
- prominent** Conspicuous, noticeable at once Widely known
- promiscuity** The state or character of engaging in sex indiscriminantly or with many persons
- prone** Tending or inclined toward
- pronged** Having one or several pointed ends
- propel** To push, impel, or drive forward
- prophecy**: Divination Act or practice of predicting the future
- propound** To set forth To put forward for consideration
- protocol** Customs of proper etiquette and ceremony, especially in relation to religious or political dignitaries
- protrude** To jut out or project
- province** Sphere, area or division
- prow** The forward part of a ship, any similar projecting or leading part
- prudent** Careful Showing wisdom and good judgment in practical matters
- psalm** A sacred hymn, song or poem
- psychic**: "Of the psyche or soul" Sensitive to spiritual processes and energies Inwardly or intuitively aware of nonphysical realities, able to use powers such as clairvoyance, clairaudience and precognition Nonphysical, subtle, pertaining to the deeper aspects of man See *mysticism*, *odic*.
- pūjā** पूजा "Worship, adoration" An Āgamic rite of worship performed in the home, temple or shrine, to the *mūrti*, *śrī pādukā*, or other consecrated object, or to a person, such as the *satguru* Its inner purpose is to purify the atmosphere around the object worshiped, establish a connection with the inner worlds and invoke the presence of God, Gods or one's *guru* During *pūjā*, the officiant (*pūjārī*) recites various chants praising the Divine and beseeching divine blessings, while making offerings in accordance with established traditions *Pūjā*, the worship of a *mūrti* through water, lights and flowers in temples and shrines, is the Āgamic counterpart of the Vedic *yajña* rite, in which offerings are conveyed through the sacred *homa* fire. These are the two great streams of adoration and communion in Hinduism Central

steps of *pūjā* include 1) *āchamana*, water sipping for purification, 2) *Ganapati prārthanā*, prayers to Ganeśa, 3) *sankalpa*, declaration of intent, 4) *ghaṇṭā*, ringing bell, inviting *devas* and dismissing *asuras*; 5) *āvāhana*, inviting the Deity, 6) *mantras* and *dhyāna*, meditating on the Deity, 7) *svāgata*, welcoming, 8) *namaskāra*, obeisance, 9) *arghyam*, water offerings, 10) *pradakshina*, circumambulation, 11) *abhisheka*, bathing the *mūrti*, 12) *dhūpa*, incense-offering, 13) *dīpa*, offering lights, 14) *naivedya*, offering food, 15) *archana*, chanting holy names, 16) *ārati*, final offering of lights, 17) *prārthanā*, personal requests, 18) *visarjana*, dismissal-farewell. Also central are *prāṇāyāma* (breath control), *guru vandana* (adoration of the preceptor), *nyāsa* (empowerment through touching) and *mudrā* (mystic gestures). *Pūjā* offerings also include *pushpa* (flowers), *arghya* (water), *tāmbūla* (betel leaf) and *chandana* (sandalpaste) — *ātmārtha pūjā*. *Kārana Āgama*, v 2, states *Ātmārtha cha parārtha cha pūjā dvividhamuchyate*, "Worship is two-fold for the benefit of oneself and for the benefit of others." *Ātmārtha pūjā* is done for oneself and immediate family, usually at home in a private shrine — *parārtha pūjā*. "*Pūjā* for others" *Parārtha pūjā* is public *pūjā*, performed by authorized or ordained priests in a public shrine or temple. See *pujārī*, *yajña*.

**pujārī** पुजारी "Worshiper" A general term for Hindu temple priests, as well as anyone performing *pūjā*. *Pujārī* (sometimes *pūjārī*) is the Hindi form of the Sanskrit *pūjaka*, *pūsārī* in Tamil. *Archaka* is another term for priest used in the southern tradition. *Purohita* is a Smārta *brāhmin* priest who specializes in domestic rites. See *pūjā*.

**pulsate** To beat or throb in rhythm, as the heart.

**pundit (pandita)** पण्डित A Hindu religious scholar or theologian, a man well versed in philosophy, liturgy, religious law and sacred science.

**punarjanma** पुनर्जन्म "Reincarnation" From *punah*, "again and again," and *janma*, "taking birth." See *reincarnation*.

**Puñjāb** पंजाब The area of ancient India between the Indus and Sutlej, below Kashmir. It is now divided between India and Pakistan. It was a center of Śaivism until Muslim invasions. The modern Indian state is 19,445 square miles in area with a population of 18 million.

**punsavana** पुसवन "Male rite, bringing forth a male." Traditional sacrament performed during early pregnancy in prayer of a son. See *samskāras of birth*.

**punya** पुण्य "Holy, virtuous, auspicious" 1) Good or righteous. 2) Meritorious action. 3) Merit earned through right thought, word and action. *Punya* includes all forms of doing good, from the simplest helpful deed to a lifetime of conscientious beneficence. Each act of *punya* carries its *karmic* consequence, *karmaphala*, "fruit of action"—the positive reward of actions, words and deeds that are in keeping with *dharma*. Awakened psychics who have developed clairvoyant sight can clearly see the *punya* accrued in the inner subconscious aura as a colorful, free-flowing, astral, light-energy, *prāṇic* substance. *Punya* is seen as light-hued, pastel colors, whereas its

counterpart, *pāpa*, is seen as shades of darker colors which are usually static and immovable. These arrangements of the *pāpa* shades and *punya* hues are not unlike the free-expression paintings found in modern art. *Punya* colors produce inner contentment, deep joy, the feeling of security and fearlessness. *Pāpa* can be dissolved and *punya* created through penance (*prāyaścitta*), austerity (*tapas*) and good deeds (*sukṛityā*). *Punya* is earned through virtuous living, following the multi-faceted laws of *dharma*. *Punya* depends on purity of acts according to various factors including 1) the *karma* and evolution of the individual, 2) degree of sacrifice and unselfish motivation and 3) time and place. For example, virtuous deeds, *sādhana*, *tapas* and penance have greater merit when performed in holy places and at auspicious times. The *Tirukural* (105) states that "Help rendered another cannot be measured by the extent of the assistance given. Its true measure is the worth of the recipient." In other words, a small act done for a great and worthy soul carries more *punya* than even a large act performed for a lesser person. (Opposite of *pāpa*) See *aura*, *karma*, *pāpa*, *penance*.

**Purāṇa.** पुराण "Ancient" Hindu folk narratives containing ethical and cosmological teachings relative to Gods, man and the world. They revolve around five subjects: primary creation, secondary creation, genealogy, cycles of time and history. There are 18 major *Purāṇas* which are designated as either Śaivite, Vaiṣṇavite or Śākta. See *folk narratives*, *mythology*.

**Pure Consciousness.** See *Parāśakti*, *Satchidānanda*, *tattva*.

**purgatory.** A state or place of temporary punishment or expiation. A hellish condition that is not eternal. *Purgatory* is actually more fitting than the term *hell* as an equivalent for the Sanskrit *Naraka*. See *hell*, *loka*, *Naraka*.

**puritan.** A person who is overly strict or rigid regarding morals and religion.

**purity-impurity.** *Saucha-asaucha*. Purity and its opposite, pollution, are a fundamental part of Hindu culture. While they imply a strong sense of physical cleanliness, their more important meanings extend to social, ceremonial, mental, emotional, psychic and spiritual contamination. Freedom from all forms of contamination is a key to Hindu spirituality, and is one of the *yamas*. Physical purity requires a clean and well-ordered environment, *yogic* purging of the internal organs and frequent cleansing with water. Mental purity derives from meditation, right living and right thinking. Emotional purity depends on control of the mind, clearing the subconscious and keeping good company. Spiritual purity is achieved through following the *yamas* and *niyamas*, study of the *Vedas* and other scriptures, pilgrimage, meditation, *jāpa*, *tapas* and *ahimsā*. Ritual purity requires the observance of certain *prāyaścittas*, or penances, for defilement derived from foreign travel, contact with base people or places, conversion to other faiths, contact with bodily wastes, attending a funeral, etc. Purity is of three forms—purity in mind, speech and body, or thought, word and deed. Purity is the pristine and natural state of the soul. Impurity, or pollution, is



the obscuring of this state by adulterating experience and beclouding conceptions In daily life, the Hindu strives to protect this innate purity by wise living, following the codes of *dharma* This includes harnessing the sexual energies, associating with other virtuous Hindu devotees, never using harsh, angered or indecent language, and keeping a clean and healthy physical body See *dharma*, *pāpa*, *penance*, *punya*, *yama-niyama*.

**pūrṇimā** पूर्णिमा "Full" Full moon See *Guru Pūrṇimā*.

**purohita** पुरोहित "Front-most, leader, family priest." A Smārta *brāhmin* priest who specializes in home ceremonies See *Smārta*, *pujārī*

**pursue (pursuit)** To go with determination after a goal To follow

**purusha** पुरुष "The spirit that dwells in the body/in the universe" Person, spirit, man Metaphysically, the soul, neither male nor female Also used in Yoga and Sāṅkhya for the transcendent Self A synonym for *ātman* *Purusha* can also refer to the Supreme Being or Soul, as it sometimes does in the *Upaṇishads* In the *Rig Veda* hymn "Purusha Sūkta," Purusha is the cosmic man, having a thousand heads, a thousand eyes, a thousand feet and encompassing the earth, spreading in all directions into animate and inanimate things In the Sāṅkhya system, *purusha* is one of two supreme, beginningless realities spirit and matter, *purusha* and *prakṛti*, the male and female principles It is the quiescent unmanifest, pure consciousness, contrasted with *Prakṛti*, the manifesting, primal nature from which the cosmos unfolds In Śaiva cosmology, *purusha* is the 25th of 36 *tattvas*, one level subtler than *prakṛti* Beyond these lie the subtle realms of *śuddha māyā*. Transcending all the *tattvas* is Paraśiva See. *ātman*, *jīva*, *prakṛti*, *soul*, *tattva*.

**purusha dharma** पुरुषधर्म "A man's code of duty and conduct." See *dharma*.

**purushārtha** पुरुषार्थ "Human wealth or purpose" The four pursuits in which humans may legitimately engage, also called *chaturvarga*, "four-fold good"—a basic principle of Hindu ethics —*dharma*. "Righteous living" The fulfillment of virtue, good works, duties and responsibilities, restraints and observances—performing one's part in the service and upliftment of society This includes pursuit of truth under a *guru* of a particular *paramparā* and *sampradāya*. *Dharma* is of four primary forms It is the steady guide for *artha* and *kāma*. See *dharma* —*artha* "Wealth" Material welfare and abundance, money, property, possessions *Artha* is the pursuit of wealth, guided by *dharma* It includes the basic needs—food, money, clothing and shelter—and extends to the wealth required to maintain a comfortable home, raise a family, fulfill a successful career and perform religious duties The broadest concept of wealth embraces financial independence, freedom from debt, worthy children, good friends, leisure time, faithful servants, trustworthy employees, and the joys of giving, including tithing (*daśamāṃsha*), feeding the poor, supporting religious mendicants, worshipping devoutly, protecting all creatures, upholding the family and offering hospitality to guests *Artha* measures not only riches but quality of life, pro-

viding the personal and social security needed to pursue *kāma*, *dharma* and *moksha*. It allows for the fulfillment of the householder's five daily sacrifices, *pañcha mahāyajña* to God, ancestors, *devas*, creatures and men. See *yajña* —*kāma* "Pleasure, love, enjoyment" Earthly love, aesthetic and cultural fulfillment, pleasures of the world (including sexual), the joys of family, intellectual satisfaction. Enjoyment of happiness, security, creativity, usefulness and inspiration. See *Kāma Sūtras* —*moksha* "Liberation" Freedom from rebirth through the ultimate attainment, realization of the Self God, Paraśiva. The spiritual attainments and superconscious joys, attending renunciation and *yoga* leading to Self Realization. *Moksha* comes through the fulfillment of *dharma*, *artha* and *kāma* (known in Tamil as *aram*, *porul* and *inbam*, and explained by Tiruvalluvar in *Tirukural*) in the current or past lives, so that one is no longer attached to worldly joys or sorrows. It is the supreme goal of life, called *paramārtha*. See *liberation*, *moksha*.



qualified nondualism. See *Viśiṣṭādvaita*.

**quantum** Quantity or amount. In science's quantum theory a fixed basic unit, usually of energy —**quantum particles of light** Light understood not as a continuum, but as traveling bundles each of a same intensity. Deeper still, these particles originate and resolve themselves in a one divine energy —**at the quantum**

**level (of the mind)** Deep within the mind, at a subtle energy level. See *apex of creation*, *microcosm-macrocosm*, *tattva*.  
**quell** To put an end to, subdue or make quiet.



**race** Technically speaking, each of the five races of man (Caucasoid, Congoid, Mongoloid, Australoid and Capoid) is a *Homo sapiens* subspecies. A subspecies is a branch showing slight but significant differences from another branch living in a different area. Few traits are unique to any one race. It is the combination of several traits that indicate racial identity. Accurate race deter-

mination can be made by blood analysis or by measuring and comparing certain body dimensions. Ninety-eight percent of all Hindus belong to the Caucasoid race. There are also large numbers of Hindu Mongoloids in Nepal and Assam and some Australoids, such as the Gond and Bhil tribes of India. North and South Indians are among Earth's 2.5 billion Caucasoids, whose traits include straight to wavy hair, thin lips, small to medium teeth, blue to dark brown eyes and a high incident of A<sub>2</sub>-Rh and Gm blood genes. Skin color, often erroneously attached to the idea of race, is now known to be adaptation to climate. Over generations, people in northern climates have developed lighter complexions than their southern brothers.



guiding of the flow of consciousness When concentration is sustained long and deeply enough, meditation naturally follows 7) —*dhyāna* “Meditation” A quiet, alert, powerfully concentrated state wherein new knowledge and insight pour into the field of consciousness This state is possible once the subconscious mind has been cleared or quieted 8) —*samādhi* “Enstasy,” which means “standing within one’s self” “Sameness, contemplation” The state of true *yoga*, in which the meditator and the object of meditation are one See *āsana*, *samādhi*, *yoga*

**Rāma**, राम Venerated hero of the *Rāmāyana* epic, and one of the two most popular incarnations of Vishnu, along with Krishna His worship is almost universal among Vaishnavas, and extensive among Smārtas and other liberal Hindus He was a great worshiper of Śiva, and a Śiva temple, called Rāmeśvaram, was built in his name at the southern tip of India

**Rāmakanṭha I** रामकण्ठ A great exponent of Śaiva Siddhānta, ca 950 In the lineage of Aghoraśiva

**Rāmakanṭha II** रामकण्ठ Great exponent of Śaiva Siddhānta, ca 1150 Aghoraśiva’s teacher

**Rāmakṛṣṇa** रामकृष्ण (1836–1886) One of the great saints and mystics of modern Hinduism, and an exemplar of monistic theism—fervent devotee of Mother Kālī and staunch monist who taught oneness and the pursuit of *nirvikalpa samādhi*, realization of the Absolute He was *guru* to the great Swāmī Vivekānanda (1863–1902), who internationalized Hindu thought and philosophy

**Rāmānuja**, रामानुज Philosopher (1017–1137), saint, great *bhakta*, founder of one of five major Vaishnava schools, and considered the greatest critic of *advaita* In his famous *Śrī Bhāṣya* on the *Brahma Sūtras*, he countered Śankara’s absolute monism point-by-point with his qualified monism, called *Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta* See *śaḍ darśana*, *Vedānta*

**Rāmarāja** रामराज (1478–1565) The last king of South India’s Vijayanagara empire

**Rāmāyana**, रामायण “Life of Rāma” One of India’s two grand epics (*Itihāsa*) along with the *Mahābhārata* It is Valmiki’s tragic love story of Rāma and Sītā, whose exemplary lives have helped set high standards of dignity and nobility as an integral part of Hindu *dharma* Astronomical data in the story puts Rāma’s reign at about 2015 BCE See *Rāma*

**Rāmprasād**, रामप्रसाद Great Bengali devotional saint-poet (1718–1775) who wrote hymns to Śakti

**rasātala**, रसातल “Subterranean region” The fifth *chakra* below the *mūlād-hāra*, centered in the ankles Corresponds to the fifth astral netherworld beneath the earth’s surface, called Rujisha (“expelled”) or Rasātala Region of selfishness, self-centeredness and possessiveness *Rasā* means “earth, soil, moisture” See *chakra*, *loka*, *Naraka*.

**rationalize** To excuse through reason To make plausible explanations for

**Raurava Āgama** रौरव आगम Among the 28 *Saiva Siddhānta Āgamas*, this scripture was conveyed by Lord Śiva to sage Ruru (hence the name) Its extensive *kriyā pāda* section details the structure of the Śiva temple and its annexes

**Rāvana** रावण Villain of the *Rāmāyana* epic A legendary king of Śrī Lanka, adversary of Rāma, eventually defeated by Rāma and his armies

**reabsorption (reabsorb)** Taking in again, as water is squeezed from and then drawn back into a sponge See *cosmic cycle, mahāpralaya, pralaya*

**reaction** A response to an action

**reaffirmation** A new affirming or a declaration about a thing as being true or still pertinent. See *affirmation*

**reality** See *Absolute Reality, relative*.

**realm** A kingdom, region or area See *loka*

**reap** To cut for harvest To gain as a result of actions or effort

**rebellious** Resisting authority or any form of control

**rebound**. To bounce back

**recluse** A person who retreats from the world and lives in seclusion

**reconcile (reconciliation)** To settle or resolve, as a dispute To make consistent or compatible, e g , two conflicting ideas

**redeem** To recover, to set free from penalty or deliver from sin —**redemption** Act of redeeming See *absolution, penance*.

**reembody** To come into a body again To reincarnate

**reincarnation** “Re-entering the flesh” *Punarjanma*, metempsychosis The process wherein souls take on a physical body through the birth process Reincarnation is one of the fundamental principles of Hindu spiritual insight, shared by the mystical schools of nearly all religions, including Jainism, Sikhism, Buddhism (and even by Christianity until it was cast out by the Nicene Council in 787) It is against the backdrop of this principle of the soul’s enjoying many lives that other aspects of Hinduism can be understood It is a repetitive cycle, known as *punarjanma*, which originates in the subtle plane (Antarloka), the realm in which souls live between births and return to after death Here they are assisted in readjusting to the “in-between” world and eventually prepared for yet another birth The quality and nature of the birth depends on the merit or demerit of their past actions (*karma*) and on the needs of their unique pattern of development and experience (*dharma*) The mother, the father and the soul together create a new body for the soul At the moment of conception, the soul connects with and is irrevocably bound to the embryo As soon as the egg is fertilized, the process of human life begins It is during the mid-term of pregnancy that the full humanness of the fetus is achieved and the soul fully inhabits the new body, a stage which is acknowledged when the child begins to move and kick within the mother’s womb (*Tirumantiram*, 460 “There in the pregnant womb, the soul lay in primordial quiescence

- [*turiya*] state From that state, *Māyā* [or *Prakṛiti*] and Her tribe aroused it and conferred consciousness and *māyā*'s evolutes eight—desires and the rest. Thus say scriptures holy and true”) Finally, at birth the soul emerges into earth consciousness, veiled of all memory of past lives and the inner worlds The cycle of reincarnation ends when *karma* has been resolved and the Self God (*Paraśiva*) has been realized This condition of release is called *moksha* Then the soul continues to evolve and mature, but without the need to return to physical existence How many earthly births must one have to attain the unattainable? Many thousands to be sure, hastened by righteous living, *tapas*, austerities on all levels, penance and good deeds in abundance See *evolution of the soul*, *karma*, *moksha*, *nonhuman birth*, *samsāra*, *soul*
- relative** Quality or object which is meaningful only in relation to something else Not absolute —relative reality *Māyā* That which is ever changing and changeable Describes the nature of manifest existence, indicating that it is not an illusion but is also not Absolute Reality, which is eternal and unchanging See *Absolute Reality*, *māyā*
- religion** From Latin *religare*, “to bind back” Any system which advocates the belief in and worship of a Supreme Being or Power Religion is a structured vehicle for soul advancement which often includes theology, scripture, spiritual and moral practices, priesthood and liturgy See *Hinduism*
- relinquish** To give up, let go of or abandon See *sacrifice*, *tyāga*
- remorse** Deep, painful regret or guilt over a wrong one has done Moral anguish See *absolution*, *hrī*, *penance*.
- remote** Distant, secluded, hidden away or difficult to reach
- renaissance**. “Rebirth or new birth” A renewal, revival or reawakening
- render** To cause to be or to become
- renowned** Famous
- renunciation** See *sannyāsa*, *tyāga*, *vairāgya*
- Renukāchārya**. रेणुकाचार्य A Vīra Śaiva philosopher and saint
- replenish** To fill up or cause to be full again
- repose**. To rest peacefully —to repose in one's realization To cease outward activity and enjoy communion with the Divine
- repudiation** The act of publicly rejecting a thing, habit or way of being
- rescind** To cancel or revoke
- resemble** To look like, or have similar traits and qualities
- resent (resentment)** A feeling of ill-will, indignation or hostility from a sense of having been wronged
- residue**. Remainder That which is left over after a process
- resplendence**. Radiance, brilliance
- restive** Nervous, unruly, eager to go forward, hard to control
- restraints** See *yama-niyama*.
- retaliation** Paying back an injury, returning like for like, hurt for hurt Get-

ting even, vengeance

**revealing grace** See *anugraha śakti, grace*.

**rigorous** Very strict or severe

**Rig Veda** ऋग्वेद "Veda of verse (*ṛik*)" The first and oldest of the four *Veda* compendia of revealed scriptures (*śruti*), including a hymn collection (*Samhitā*), priestly explanatory manuals (*Brāhmanas*), forest treatises (*Āranyakas*) elaborating on the Vedic rites, and philosophical dialogs (*Upanishads*) Like the other *Vedas*, the *Rig Veda* was brought to earth consciousness not all at once, but gradually, over a period of perhaps several thousand years The oldest and core portion is the *Samhitā*, believed to date back, in its oral form, as far as 8,000 years, and to have been written down in archaic Sanskrit some 3,000 years ago It consists of more than 10,000 verses, averaging three or four lines (*ṛiks*), forming 1,028 hymns (*sūktas*), organized in ten books called *mandalas* It embodies prayerful hymns of praise and invocation to the Divinities of nature and to the One Divine They are the spiritual reflections of a pastoral people with a profound awe for the powers of nature, each of which they revered as sacred and alive The *ṛishis* who unfolded these outpourings of adoration perceived a well-ordered cosmos in which *dharma* is the way of attunement with celestial worlds, from which all righteousness and prosperity descends The main concern is man's relationship with God and the world, and the invocation of the subtle worlds into mundane existence Prayers beseech the Gods for happy family life, wealth, pleasure, cattle, health, protection from enemies, strength in battle, matrimony, progeny, long life and happiness, wisdom and realization and final liberation from rebirth The *Rig Veda Samhitā*, which in length equals Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* combined, is the most important hymn collection, for it lends a large number of its hymns to the other three *Veda Samhitās* (the *Sāma*, *Yajur* and *Atharva*) Chronologically, after the *Samhitās* came the *Brāhmanas*, followed by the *Āranyakas*, and finally the *Upanishads*, also called the *Vedānta*, meaning "Veda's end" See *śruti, Vedas*

**ṛishi** ऋषि "Seer" A term for an enlightened being, emphasizing psychic perception and visionary wisdom In the Vedic age, *ṛishis* lived in forest or mountain retreats, either alone or with disciples These *ṛishis* were great souls who were the inspired conveyers of the *Vedas* Seven particular *ṛishis* (the *sapta-ṛishis*) mentioned in the *Rig Veda* are said to still guide mankind from the inner worlds See *śruti*

**ṛita** ऋत "Sacred order, cosmic law, truth" See *dharma*.

**rite (or ritual)** A religious ceremony See *sacrament, sacrifice, samskāra*

**rites of passage.** Sacraments marking crucial stages of life See *samskāra*

**ṛitukāla** ऋतुकाल "Fit or proper season" Time of menses A traditional ceremony marking a young lady's coming of age *Ṛitu* also carries the meaning of "fertile time" See *samskāras of adulthood*

**Rudra** रुद्र "Controller of terrific powers," or "red, shining one" The name of Śiva as the God of dissolution, the universal force of reabsorption *Rudra-Śiva* is revered both as the "terrifying one" and the "lord of tears," for He wields and controls the terrific powers which may cause lamentation among humans See *Naṣarāja*

**rudrākṣha**. रुद्राक्ष "Eye of Rudra, or red-eyed" Refers to the third eye, or *ājñā chakra* Marble-sized, multi-faced, reddish-brown seeds from the *Eleocharpus ganitrus*, or blue marble tree, which are sacred to Śiva and a symbol of His compassion for humanity Garlands, *rudrākṣha mālā*, of larger seeds are worn around the neck by monks, and nonmonastics often wear a single bead on a cord at the throat Smaller beads (usually numbering 108) are strung together for *japa* (recitation) See *japa*, *mantra*.

**Rudraśambhu** रुद्रशम्भु Principal *guru* in the Āmardaka order of Śaiva monastics, about 775 in Ujjain, one of Śaivism's holiest cities The sect served as advisors to the king until Muslim domination around 1300

**Rudrāyamala Tantra** रुद्रयामलतन्त्र Little known text dealing with worship



**śabda kośa** शब्दकोश "Sheath of sounds, or words" Vocabulary, a dictionary or glossary of terms

sacrament 1) Holy rite, especially one solemnized in a formal, consecrated manner which is a bonding between the recipient and God, Gods or *guru* This includes rites of passage (*samiskāra*), ceremonies sanctifying crucial events or stages of life 2) *Prasāda* Sacred

substances, grace-filled gifts, blessed in sacred ceremony or by a holy person See *prasāda*, *samiskāra*

sacred thread. *Yajñopavīta* See *upanayana*

sacrifice *Yajña* 1) Giving offerings to a Deity as an expression of homage and devotion 2) Giving up something, often one's own possession, advantage or preference, to serve a higher purpose The literal meaning of *sacrifice* is "to make sacred," implying an act of worship It is the most common translation of the term *yajña*, from the verb *yuj*, "to worship" In Hinduism, all of life is a sacrifice—called *jīvayajña*, a giving of oneself—through which comes true spiritual fulfillment *Tyāga*, the power of detachment, is an essential quality of true sacrifice See *tyāga*, *yajña*

**sadāchāra**. सदाचार "Good conduct, virtue, morality" It is embodied in the principles of *dharma* See *dharma*, *yama-miyama*, *pāda*.

**Sadāśiva** सदाशिव "Ever-auspicious" A name of the Primal Soul, Śiva, a synonym for Paramēśvara, which is expressed in the physical being of the *sat-guru* *Sadāśiva* especially denotes the power of revealing grace, *anugraha śakti*, the third *tattva*, after which emerge Śiva's other four divine powers This five-fold manifestation or expression of God's activity in the cosmos is depicted in Hindu *mantras*, literature and art as the five-faced *Sadāśi-*



**vamūrti** Looking upward is *Īśāna*, “ruler” (the power of revealment) Facing east is *Tatpurusha*, “supreme soul” (the power of obscuration) Westward-looking is *Sadyojāta*, “quickly birthing” (the power of creation) Northward is *Vāmadeva*, “lovely, pleasing” (the power of preservation) Southward is *Aghora*, “nonterrifying” (the power of reabsorption) The first four faces revealed the *Vedas* The fifth face, *Īśana*, revealed the *Āgamas* These five are also called *Sadāśiva*, the revealer, *Maheśvara*, the obscurer, *Brahmā*, the creator, *Vishnu*, the preserver, and *Rudra*, the destroyer See *Parameśvara*, *tattva*.

**sādhaka** साधक “Accomplished one, a devotee who performs *sādhana*.” A serious aspirant who has undertaken spiritual disciplines, is usually celibate and under the guidance of a *guru* He wears white and may be under vows, but is not a *sannyāsin* See *sādhana*.

**sādhana** साधन “Effective means of attainment” Religious or spiritual disciplines, such as *pūjā*, *yoga*, meditation, *japa*, fasting and austerity The effect of *sādhana* is the building of willpower, faith and confidence in oneself and in God, Gods and *guru* *Sādhana* harnesses and transmutes the instinctive-intellectual nature, allowing progressive spiritual unfoldment into the superconscious realizations and innate abilities of the soul See *purity-impurity*, *pāda*, *rāja yoga*, *sādhana mārga*, *spiritual unfoldment*

**sādhana mārga** साधनमार्ग “The way of *sādhana*” A term used by Sage *Yogaswāmī* to name his prescription for seekers of Truth—a path of intense effort, spiritual discipline and consistent inner transformation, as opposed to theoretical and intellectual learning See *mysticism*, *pāda*, *sādhana*, *spiritual unfoldment*

**sādhū** साधु “Virtuous one, straight, unerring” A holy person dedicated to the search for God A *sādhū* may or may not be a *yogī* or a *sannyāsin*, or be connected in any way with a *guru* or legitimate lineage *Sādhūs* usually have no fixed abode and travel unattached from place to place, often living on alms There are countless *sādhūs* on the roads, byways, mountains, riverbanks, and in the *āśramas* and caves of India They have, by their very existence, a profound, stabilizing effect on the consciousness of India and the world See *vairāgi*.

**sādhvī** साध्वी Feminine counterpart of *sādhū*. See *sādhū*

**Saguna Brahman** सगुणब्रह्मन् “God with qualities” The Personal Lord See *Brahman*, *Parameśvara*.

**sahasra lekhana sādhana** सहस्रलेखनसाधन “Thousand-times writing discipline” The spiritual practice of writing a sacred *mantra* 1,008 times

**sahasrāra chakra** सहस्रारचक्र “Thousand-spoked wheel” The cranial psychic force center See *chakra*.

**Śaiva** शैव Of or relating to *Śaivism* or its adherents, of whom there are about 400 million in the world today Same as *Śaivite*. See *Śaivism*

**Śaiva Āgamas** शैव आगम The sectarian revealed scriptures of the *Śaivas*

Strongly theistic, they identify Śiva as the Supreme Lord, immanent and transcendent. They are in two main divisions: the 64 *Kashmīr Śaiva Āgamas* and the 28 *Śaiva Siddhānta Āgamas*. The latter group are the fundamental sectarian scriptures of Śaiva Siddhānta. Of these, ten are of the *Śivabheda* division and are considered dualistic: 1) *Kāmika*, 2) *Yogaja*, 3) *Chintya*, 4) *Kāraṇa*, 5) *Ajita*, 6) *Dīpta*, 7) *Sūkshma*, 8) *Sāhasraka*, 9) *Aṃśumat* and 10) *Suprabheda*. There are 18 in the *Rudrabheda* group, classed as dual-nondual: 11) *Vijaya*, 12) *Niśvāsa*, 13) *Svāyambhuva*, 14) *Aṇala*, 15) *Vīra* (*Bhadra*), 16) *Raurava*, 17) *Makuta*, 18) *Vuṇala*, 19) *Chandrajñāna* (or *Chandrahāsa*), 20) *Mukhabimba* (or *Bimba*), 21) *Prodgītā* (or *Udgītā*), 22) *Lālita*, 23) *Siddha*, 24) *Santāna*, 25) *Sarvokta* (*Narasimha*), 26) *Parameśvara*, 27) *Kirana* and 28) *Vātula* (or *Parahita*). Rishi Tirumular, in his *Tirumantiram*, refers to 28 *Āgamas* and mentions nine by name. Eight of these—*Kāraṇa*, *Kāmika*, *Vīra*, *Chintya*, *Vātula*, *Vuṇala*, *Suprabheda* and *Makuta*—are in the above list of 28 furnished by the French Institute of Indology, Pondicherry. The ninth, *Kalottāra*, is presently regarded as an *Upāgama*, or secondary text, of *Vātula*. The *Kāmika* is the *Āgama* most widely followed in Tamil Śaiva temples, because of the availability of Aghoraśiva's manual-commentary (*paddhati*) on it. *Vīra* Śaivites especially refer to the *Vātula* and *Vīra Āgamas*. The *Śaiva Āgama* scriptures, above all else, are the connecting strand through all the schools of Śaivism. The *Āgamas* themselves express that they are entirely consistent with the teachings of the *Veda*, that they contain the essence of the *Veda*, and must be studied with the same high degree of devotion. See *Āgamas*, *Vedas*.

**Śaiva Siddhānta.** शैवसिद्धान्त “Final conclusions of Śaivism.” The most widespread and influential Śaivite school today, predominant especially among the Tamil people in Sri Lanka and South India. It is the formalized theology of the divine revelations contained in the twenty-eight *Śaiva Āgamas*. The first known *guru* of the Śuddha (“pure”) Śaiva Siddhānta tradition was Maharishi Nandinātha of Kashmir (ca BCE 250), recorded in Pāṇini's book of grammar as the teacher of *ṛishis* Patañjali, Vyāghrapāda and Vasishṭha. Other sacred scriptures include the *Tirumantiram* and the voluminous collection of devotional hymns, the *Tirumurai*, and the masterpiece on ethics and statecraft, the *Tirukural*. For Śaiva Siddhāntins, Śiva is the totality of all, understood in three perfections: *Parameśvara* (the Personal Creator Lord), *Parāśakti* (the substratum of form) and *Paraśiva* (Absolute Reality which transcends all). Souls and world are identical in essence with Śiva, yet also differ in that they are evolving. A pluralistic stream arose in the middle ages from the teachings of Aghoraśiva and Meykandar. For Aghoraśiva's school (ca 1150) Śiva is not the material cause of the universe, and the soul attains perfect “sameness” with Śiva upon liberation. Meykandar's (ca 1250) pluralistic school denies that souls ever attain perfect sameness or unity with Śiva. See *Śaivism*.

**Śaiva Viśiṣṭādvaita** शैवविशिष्टाद्वैत The philosophy of Śiva Advaita See *Śiva Advaita*

**Śaivism (Śaiva)** शैव The religion followed by those who worship Śiva as supreme God. Oldest of the four sects of Hinduism The earliest historical evidence of Śaivism is from the 8,000-year-old Indus Valley civilization in the form of the famous seal of Śiva as Lord Paśupati, seated in a *yogic* pose In the *Rāmāyana*, dated astronomically at 2000 BCE, Lord Rāma worshiped Śiva, as did his rival Rāvaṇa Buddha in 624 BCE was born into a Śaivite family, and records of his time speak of the Śaiva ascetics who wandered the hills looking much as they do today There are many schools of Śaivism, six of which are Śaiva Siddhānta, Pāśupata Śaivism, Kāshmīr Śaivism, Vīra Śaivism, Siddha Siddhānta and Śiva Advaita They are based firmly on the *Vedas* and *Śaiva Āgamas*, and thus have much in common, including the following principle doctrines 1) the five powers of Śiva—creation, preservation, destruction, revealing and concealing grace, 2) The three categories *Patī*, *paśu* and *pāśa* (“God, souls and bonds”), 3) the three bonds *ānava*, *karma* and *māyā*, 4) the three-fold power of Śiva *icchā śakti*, *kriyā śakti* and *jñāna śakti*, 5) the thirty-six *tattvas*, or categories of existence, 6) the need for initiation from a *satguru*, 7) the power of *mantra*, 8) the four *pādas* (stages). *charyā* (selfless service), *kriyā* (devotion), *yoga* (meditation), and *jñāna* (illumination), 9) the belief in the Pañchākshara as the foremost *mantra*, and in *rudrāksha* and *vibhūti* as sacred aids to faith, 10) the beliefs in *satguru* (preceptor), Śivalinga (object of worship) and *sangama* (company of holy persons) See *individual school entries*, *Śaivism (six schools)*

**Śaivism (six schools)**. Through history Śaivism has developed a vast array of lineages Philosophically, six schools are most notable Śaiva Siddhānta, Pāśupata Śaivism, Kāshmīr Śaivism, Vīra Śaivism, Siddha Siddhānta and Śiva Advaita Śaiva Siddhānta first distinguished itself in the second century BCE through the masterful treatise of a Himalayan pilgrim to South India, Rishi Tirumular It is Śaivism’s most widespread and influential school Pāśupata Śaivism emerged in the Himalayan hills over 25 centuries ago Ancient writings chronicle it as a Śiva ascetic *yoga* path whose most renowned *guru* was Lakulīśa Kāshmīr Śaivism, a strongly monistic lineage, arose from the revelatory aphorisms of Śrī Vasugupta in the tenth century Vīra Śaivism took shape in India’s Karnataka state in the 12th-century under the inspiration of Śrī Basavaṇṇa It is a dynamic, reformist sect, rejecting religious complexity and stressing each devotee’s personal relationship with God Siddha Siddhānta, also known as Gorakshanātha Śaivism, takes its name from the writings of the powerful 10th-century *yogi*, Śrī Gorakshanātha, whose techniques for Śiva identity attracted a large monastic and householder following in North India and Nepal Śiva Advaita is a Śaivite interpretation of the Vedānta Sūtras, based on the writings of Śrīkaṇṭha, a 12th-century scholar who sought to reconcile the *Upanishads* with the

*Āgamas* See individual school entries

*Śaivite* (Śaiva) शैव Of or relating to Śaivism or its adherents, of whom there are about 400 million in the world today See *Śaivism*

*śākāhāra* शाकाहार "Vegetarian diet" From *śāka*, "vegetable," and *āhāra*, "eating; taking food" See *meat-eater, vegetarian, yama-niyama*.

*sakhā mārga* सखामार्ग "Friend's path" See *attainment, pāda*

*sākshin* साक्षिन् "Witness" Awareness, the witness consciousness of the soul Known as *neṣin* in the mystical Nātha language of Shum See *awareness, consciousness (individual), chit, Shum, soul*

*Śākta* शक्त Of or relating to *Śāktism* See *Śāktism*

*Śākta Tantrism* शक्ततन्त्र See *tantrism*

*Śakti* शक्ति "Power, energy" The active power or manifest energy of Śiva that pervades all of existence Its most refined aspect is *Parāśakti*, or *Satchidānanda*, the pure consciousness and primal substratum of all form This pristine, divine energy unfolds as *içchā śakti* (the power of desire, will, love), *kriyā śakti* (the power of action) and *jñāna śakti* (the power of wisdom, knowing), represented as the three prongs of Śiva's *triśūla*, or trident. From these arise the five powers of revealment, concealment, dissolution, preservation and creation

In Śaiva Siddhānta, Śiva is All, and His divine energy, Śakti, is inseparable from Him This unity is symbolized in the image of *Ardhanārīśvara*, "half-female God" In popular, village Hinduism, the unity of Śiva and Śakti is replaced with the concept of Śiva and Śakti as separate entities Śakti is represented as female, and Śiva as male In Hindu temples, art and mythology, they are everywhere seen as the divine couple This depiction has its source in the folk-narrative sections of the *Purāṇas*, where it is given elaborate expression Śakti is personified in many forms as the consorts of the Gods For example, the Goddesses *Pārvatī*, *Lakshmi* and *Sarasvatī* are the respective mythological consorts of Śiva, *Vishnu* and *Brahmā* Philosophically, however, the caution is always made that God and God's energy are One, and the metaphor of the inseparable divine couple serves only to illustrate this Oneness

Within the Śākta religion, the worship of the Goddess is paramount, in Her many fierce and benign forms Śakti is the Divine Mother of manifest creation, visualized as a female form, and Śiva is specifically the Unmanifest Absolute The fierce or black (*asita*) forms of the Goddess include *Kālī*, *Durgā*, *Chandī*, *Chamundī*, *Bhadrakālī* and *Bhairavī* The benign or white (*sita*) forms include *Umā*, *Gaurī*, *Ambikā*, *Pārvatī*, *Maheśvarī*, *Lalitā* and *Annapūrnā* As *Rājārājeśvarī* ("divine queen of kings"), She is the presiding Deity of the *Śrī Chakra yantra*. She is also worshiped as the ten *Mahāvidyās*, manifestations of the highest knowledge—*Kālī*, *Tārā*, *Shoḍaśī*, *Bhuvaneśvarī*, *Chinnamastā*, *Bhairavī*, *Dhūmāvati*, *Bagatā*, *Mātangi* and *Kamalā* While some Śāktas view these as individual beings, most revere

them as manifestations of the singular Devī. There are also numerous minor Goddess forms, in the category of *grāmadevatā* ("village Deity"). These include Piṭāri, "snake-catcher" (usually represented by a simple stone), and Mariyamman, "smallpox Goddess."

In the *yoga* mysticism of all traditions, divine energy, *śakti*, is experienced within the human body in three aspects: 1) the feminine force, *idā śakti*, 2) the masculine force, *pingalā śakti*, and 3) the pure androgynous force, *kundalinī śakti*, that flows through the *sushumnā nāḍī*.

Śakti is most easily experienced by devotees as the sublime, bliss-inspiring energy that emanates from a holy person or sanctified Hindu temple. See *Amman*, *Ardhanārīśvara*, *Goddess*, *Parāśakti*, *Śāktism*.

**śaktipāta** शक्तिपात "Descent of grace" *Guru dīkshā*, initiation from the preceptor, particularly the first initiation, which awakens the *kundalinī* and launches the process of spiritual unfoldment. See *anugraha śakti*, *dīkshā*, *grace*, *kundalinī*.

**Śāktism (Śākta)** शक्त "Doctrine of power" The religion followed by those who worship the Supreme as the Divine Mother—Śakti or Devī—in Her many forms, both gentle and fierce. Śāktism is one of the four primary sects of Hinduism. Śāktism's first historical signs are thousands of female statuettes dated ca 5500 BCE recovered at the Mehrgarh village in India. In philosophy and practice, Śāktism greatly resembles Śaivism, both faiths promulgating, for example, the same ultimate goals of *advaitic* union with Śiva and *moksha*. But Śāktas worship Śakti as the Supreme Being exclusively, as the dynamic aspect of Divinity, while Śiva is considered solely transcendent and is not worshiped. There are many forms of Śāktism, with endless varieties of practices which seek to capture divine energy or power for spiritual transformation. Geographically, Śāktism has two main forms, the Śrīkula "family of the Goddess Śrī (or Lakshmi)," which respects the *brāhminical* tradition (a mainstream Hindu tradition which respects caste and purity rules) and is strongest in South India, and the Kālikula, "family of Kālī," which rejects *brāhminical* tradition and prevails in Northern and Eastern India. Four major expressions of Śāktism are evident today: folk-shamanism, *yoga*, devotionism and universalism. Among the eminent *mantras* of Śāktism is *Aum Hṛīm Chandīkāyaḥ Namah*, "I bow to Her who tears apart all dualities." There are many varieties of folk Śāktism gravitating around various forms of the Goddess, such as Kālī, Durgā and a number of forms of Amman. Such worship often involves animal sacrifice and fire-walking, though the former is tending to disappear. See *Amman*, *Goddess*, *Ishṭa Devatā*, *Kālī*, *Śakti*, *tantrism*.

**Śakti Viśiṣṭādvaita** शक्तिविशिष्टाद्वैत The philosophy of Vira Śaivism. See *Vira Śaivism*.

**śāktopāya**. शाक्तोपाय "Way of power" See *upāya*.

**Śākya** शाक्य Name of the Śaivite dynasty into which Buddha, also called

- Śakyamuni, was born (in what is now Nepal) See *Buddha*
- samādhi* समाधि "Enstasy," which means "standing within one's Self" "Sameness, contemplation, union, wholeness, completion, accomplishment" *Samādhi* is the state of true *yoga*, in which the meditator and the object of meditation are one *Samādhi* is of two levels The first is *savikalpa samādhi* ("enstasy with form or seed"), identification or oneness with the essence of an object Its highest form is the realization of the primal substratum or pure consciousness, *Satchidānanda* The second is *nirvikalpa samādhi* ("enstasy without form or seed"), identification with the Self, in which all modes of consciousness are transcended and Absolute Reality, *Paraśiva*, beyond time, form and space, is experienced This brings in its aftermath a complete transformation of consciousness In Classical *Yoga*, *nirvikalpa samādhi* is known as *asamprajñāta samādhi*, "supraconscious enstasy"—*samādhi*, or beingness, without thought or cognition, *prajñā* *Savikalpa samādhi* is also called *samprajñāta samādhi*, "conscious enstasy" (Note that *samādhi* differs from *samyama*—the continuous meditation on a single subject or mystic key [such as a *chakra*] to gain revelation on a particular subject or area of consciousness As explained by Patañjali, it consists of *dhāraṇā*, *dhyāna* and *samādhi*) See *enstasy*, *kundalinī*, *Paraśiva*, *rāja yoga*, *samarasa*, *Satchidānanda*, *Self Realization*, *trance*
- samarasa* समरस "Even essence" or "same taste" In *Siddha Siddhānta*, a term describing the state attained by a *yogī* in which he consciously experiences the world and daily life while never losing his perspective of the essential unity of God, soul and world Similar in concept to *sāyujya samādhi* See *jñāna*, *kaivalya*, *samādhi*, *Siddha Siddhānta*, *Śivasāyujya*
- samāvartana* समावर्तन "Returning home" The ceremony marking a youth's completion of Vedic studies See *samskāras*
- Sāma Veda* सामवेद "Song of wisdom" Third of the four *Vedas* Ninety percent of its 1,875 stanzas are derived from the *Rig Veda* It is a collection of hymns specially arranged and notated for chanting with a distinctive melody and cadence by the *Udgātā* priests during *yajña*, fire ceremony, together with stanzas from the *Yajur Veda* This *Veda* forms the oldest known form of Indian music See *Śruti*, *Vedas*
- Sambandar* சம்பந்தர் Child saint of the 7th-century Śaivite renaissance Composed many *Devaram* hymns in praise of Śiva, reconverted at least one Tamil king who had embraced Jainism, and vehemently sought to counter the incursion of Buddhism, bringing the Tamil people back to Śaivism See *Nalvar*, *Nayanar*, *Tirumurai*
- Sāmbhavopāya* शम्भवोपाय "Way of Śambhu (Śiva)" See *upāya*
- samhāra* सहार "Dissolution, destruction" See *mahāpralaya*, *Naṭarāja*
- samhitā* सहिता "Collection" 1) Any methodically arranged collection of texts or verses 2) The hymn collection of each of the four *Vedas* 3) A common alternate term for Vaishnava *Āgamas* See *Vedas*

**sampradāya.** संप्रदाय “Traditional doctrine of knowledge” A living stream of tradition or theology within Hinduism, passed on by oral training and initiation. The term derives from the verb *sampradā*, meaning “to give, grant, bestow or confer on, to hand down by tradition, to bequeath.” *Sampradāya* is thus a philosophy borne down through history by verbal transmission. It is more inclusive than the related term *paramparā* which names a living lineage of ordained *gurus* who embody and carry forth a *sampradāya*. Each *sampradāya* is often represented by many *paramparās*. See *paramparā*.

**samsāra.** संसार “Flow” The phenomenal world. Transmigratory existence, fraught with impermanence and change. The cycle of birth, death and re-birth, the total pattern of successive earthly lives experienced by a soul. A term similar to *punarjanma* (reincarnation), but with broader connotations. See *evolution of the soul*, *karma*, *punarjanma*, *reincarnation*.

**samsārī.** संसारी “One in *samsāra*, wanderer” A soul during transmigration, immersed in or attached to mundane existence, hence not striving for liberation (*moksha*). A *samsārī* is someone who is not “on the path.” See *materialism*, *samsāra*, *San Mārga*, *worldly*.

**samskāra.** संस्कार “Impression, activator, sanctification, preparation” 1) The imprints left on the subconscious mind by experience (from this or previous lives), which then color all of life, one’s nature, responses, states of mind, etc. 2) A sacrament or rite done to mark a significant transition of life. These make deep and positive impressions on the mind of the recipient, inform the family and community of changes in the lives of its members and secure inner-world blessings. The numerous *samskāras* are outlined in the *Gṛhya Śāstras*. Most are accompanied by specific *mantras* from the *Vedas*. See *mind (five states)*, *sacrament*.

**samskāras of birth.** From the rite of conception to the blessings of the newborn child — *garbhādhāna*. “Womb-placing” Rite of conception, where physical union is consecrated with the intent of bringing into physical birth an advanced soul — *punsavana*. “Male rite, bringing forth a male” A rite performed during the third month of pregnancy consisting of prayers for a son and for the well-being of mother and child. A custom, found in all societies, based on the need for men to defend the country, run the family business and support the parents in old age. The need for male children in such societies is also based on the fact that women outlive men and leave the family to join their husband’s family — *sīmantonayana*. “Hair-parting” A ceremony held between the fourth and seventh months in which the husband combs his wife’s hair and expresses his love and support. — *jātakarma*. “Rite of birth” The father welcomes and blesses the new-born child and feeds it a taste of *ghee* and honey. See *samskāra*.

**samskāras of childhood.** From naming to education — *nāmakarana*. “Name-giving” and formal entry into one or another sect of Hinduism, performed 11 to 41 days after birth. The name is chosen according to as-

trology, preferably the name of a God or Goddess. At this time, guardian *devas* are assigned to see the child through life. One who converts to or adopts Hinduism later in life would receive this same sacrament — *an-naprasāna* "Feeding." The ceremony marking the first taking of solid food, held at about six months (Breast-feeding generally continues) — *karnavedha* "Ear-piercing." The piercing of both ears, for boys and girls, and the inserting of gold earrings, held during the first, third or fifth year. See *earrings* — *chūdākarana* "Head-shaving." The shaving of the head, for boys and girls, between the 31st day and the fourth year — *vidyārambha*. Marks the beginning of formal education. The boy or girl ceremoniously writes his/her first letter of the alphabet in a tray of uncooked rice — *upanayana*. Given to boys at about 12 years of age, marks the beginning of the period of *brahmacharya* and formal study of scripture and sacred lore, usually with an *āchārya* or *guru* — *samāvartana*. Marks the end of formal religious study. See *samskāra*.

*samskāras* of adulthood. From coming-of-age to marriage — *ṛitukāla*. "Fit or proper season." Time of menses. A home blessing marking the coming of age for girls — *keśānta*. Marking a boy's first beard-shaving, at about 16 years. Both of the above are home ceremonies in which the young ones are reminded of their *brahmacharya*, given new clothes and jewelry and joyously admitted into the adult community as young adults — *nischitārtha* "Settlement of aim." Also called *vāgdāna*, "word-giving." A formal engagement or betrothal ceremony in which a couple pledge themselves to one another, exchanging rings and other gifts — *vivāha*. "Marriage." An elaborate and joyous ceremony performed in presence of God and Gods, in which the *homa* fire is central. To conclude the ceremony, the couple take seven steps to the Northeast as the groom recites "One step for vigor, two steps for vitality, three steps for prosperity, four steps for happiness, five steps for cattle, six steps for seasons, seven steps for friendship. To me be devoted (*Hiranyakeśi* *Grihya Sūtras* 1.6.21.2 VE)." See *samskāra*.

*samskāras* of later life. — *vānaprastha āśrama*. Age 48 marks the entrance into the elder advisor stage, celebrated in some communities by special ceremony — *sannyāsa āśrama vrata*. The advent of withdrawal from social duties and responsibilities at age 72 is sometimes ritually acknowledged (different from *sannyāsa dikshā*). See *sannyāsa dharma* — *antyeshti*. The various funeral rites performed to guide the soul in its transition to inner worlds, including preparation of the body, cremation, bone-gathering, dispersal of ashes, home purification. See *cremation*, *death*, *pinda*, *śrāddha*, *bone-gathering*, *samskāra*, *shashṭyabda pūrti*, *transition*.

*Sanātana Dharma* सनातनधर्म "Eternal religion" or "everlasting path." It is a traditional name for the Hindu religion. See *Hinduism*.

*Sanatkumāra* सनत्कुमार "Ever-youthful, perpetual virgin boy." See *Kārtikeya*.



**sañchita karma** सञ्चितकर्म “Accumulated action” The accumulated consequence of an individual’s actions in this and past lives See *karma*.

**sanctify** To make holy

**sanctum sanctorum** “Holy of holies” *Garbhagriha* The most sacred part of a temple, usually a cave-like stone chamber, in which the main icon is installed See *darśana*, *garbhagriha*, *temple*.

**sandalwood** *Chandana*. The Asian evergreen tree *Santalum album* Its sweetly fragrant heartwood is ground into the fine, tan-colored paste distributed as *prasāda* in Śaivite temples and used for sacred marks on the forehead, *tilaka*. Sandalwood is also prized for incense, carving and fine cabinetry

**sandhyā upāsana**. सन्ध्या उपासना “Worship at time’s junctures” Drawing near to God at the changes of time—worship and *sādhana* performed in the home at dawn, noon and dusk See *sādhana*

**Śāndilya Upanishad** शाण्डिल्य उपनिषद् Belongs to the *Atharva Veda*. Discusses eight forms of *yoga*, restraints, observances, breath control, meditation and the nature of Truth

**sangama**. सङ्गम “Association, fellowship” Coming together in a group, especially for religious purposes Also a town in Karnataka, South India, where the *Kṛishna* and *Malaprabhā* rivers meet, an ancient center of *Kālāmukha* Śaivism where the Vira Śaivite preceptor Basavanna lived and studied as a youth See *congregational worship*

**sankalpa**. सङ्कल्प “Will, purpose, determination” A solemn vow or declaration of purpose to perform any ritual observance Most commonly, *sankalpa* names the mental and verbal preparation made by a temple priest as he begins rites of worship During the *sankalpa*, he informs all three worlds what he is about to do He recites the name of the Deity, and the present time and place according to precise astrological notations and announces the type of ritual he is about to perform Once the *sankalpa* is made, he is bound to complete the ceremony See *pūjā*

**Śankara**. शङ्कर “Conferring happiness, propitious” A name of Śiva

**Śankara**. शङ्कर One of Hinduism’s most extraordinary monks (788–820) and preeminent *guru* of the *Smārta Sampradāya* He is noted for his monistic philosophy of *Advaita Vedānta*, his many scriptural commentaries, and establishing ten orders of *sannyāsins* with pontifical headquarters at strategic points across India He only lived 32 years, but traveled throughout India and transformed the Hindu world in that time See *Daśanāmi*, *Śankarāchārya pīṭha*, *shanmata sthāpanāchārya*, *Smārta Sampradāya*, *Vedānta*.

**Śankarāchārya pīṭha** शङ्कराचार्यपीठ *Advaita* monasteries established by Śankara (ca 788–820) as centers of *Smārta* authority in India, each with a distinct *guru paramparā* and a reigning pontiff entitled Śankarāchārya, and one of the four *Upanishadic mahāvākyas* as a *mantra* East coast Govardhana Maṭha, in Puri (center of the *Āranya* and *Vāna* orders) Himalayas Jyotiḥ Maṭha, near Badrināth (Giri, Pārvata and Sāgara orders) West coast

Śārada Maṭha, in Dvāraka (Tīrtha and Āśrama orders) South Śringeri Maṭha (Bhārati, Pūri and Sarasvatī orders) A fifth prominent *pīṭha*, associated with Śringeri Maṭha, is in Kanchīpuram, also in the South See *Daśanāmī*, *Smārta*, *Śaṅkara*

**Sāṅkhya** सांख्य “Enumeration, reckoning” See *prakṛiti*, *puruṣa*, *śad darsana*, *tattva*

**San Mārga** सन्मार्ग “True path” A term especially important in *Śaiva Siddhānta* 1) In general, the straight spiritual path leading to the ultimate goal, Self Realization, which does not detour into unnecessary psychic exploration or pointless development of *siddhis* *San Mārgī* names a person who is “on the path,” as opposed to *samsārī*, one engrossed in worldliness 2) *San Mārga* is also an alternate term for the *jñāna pāda* See *liberation*, *pāda*, *sādhana mārga*, *samsārī*

**San Mārga Sanctuary** An 11-acre sanctuary at Kauai Aadheenam on the Garden Island of Kauai, Hawaii, centered around a ½-mile straight path to the Supreme God, Śiva (Parameśvara-Parāśakti-Paraśiva) enshrined as a massive 700-pound, single-pointed earthkeeper quartz crystal in Iraivan Temple See *Subramuniyaswami*

**sannidhāna** सन्निधान “Nearness, proximity, taking charge of” A title of heads of monasteries Guru Mahāsannidhāna See *sānnidhya*

**sānnidhya** सान्निध्य “(Divine) presence, nearness, proximity” The radiance and blessed presence of divine *śakti* within and around a temple or a holy person

**sannyāsa** संन्यास “Renunciation” “Throwing down or abandoning” *Sannyāsa* is the repudiation of the *dharma*, including the obligations and duties, of the householder and the acceptance of the even more demanding *dharma* of the renunciate The ancient *śāstras* recognize four justifiable motivations for entering into *sannyāsa* *vidvat*, *vividiṣhā*, *mārkaṭa* and *ātura* *Vidvat* (“knowing, wise”) *sannyāsa* is the spontaneous withdrawal from the world in search for Self Realization which results from *karma* and tendencies developed in a previous life *Vividiṣhā* (“discriminating”) *sannyāsa* is renunciation to satisfy a yearning for the Self developed through scriptural study and practice *Mārkaṭa sannyāsa* is taking refuge in *sannyāsa* as a result of great sorrow, disappointment or misfortune in worldly pursuits (*Mārkaṭa* means “monkey-like,” perhaps implying the analogy of a monkey clinging to its mother) *Ātura* (“suffering or sick”) *sannyāsa* is entering into *sannyāsa* upon one’s deathbed, realizing that there is no longer hope in life See *sannyāsa dharma*, *sannyāsa dikṣhā*, *videhamukti*

**sannyāsa āśrama** संन्यास आश्रम “Renunciate stage” The period of life after age 72 See *āśrama*

**sannyāsa dharma** संन्यासधर्म “Renunciate life” The life, way and traditions of those who have irrevocably renounced duties and obligations of the householder path, including personal property, wealth, ambitions, social

position and family ties, in favor of the full-time monastic quest for divine awakening, Self Realization and spiritual upliftment of humanity. Traditionally, this *dharma* is available to those who are under age 25 and who otherwise meet strict qualifications. Alternately, the householder may embrace *sannyāsa dharma* by entering the *sannyāsa āśrama* after age 72 through the customary initiatory rites given by a *sannyāsin* and then diligently pursuing his spiritual *sādhana* in a state of genuine renunciation and not in the midst of his family. These two forms of *sannyāsa* are not to be confused with simply entering the *sannyāsa āśrama*, the last stage of life. See *sannyāsa, sannyāsa dikshā, sannyāsin, videhamukti*.

***sannyāsa dikshā* सन्यासदीक्षा** "Renunciate initiation." This *dikshā* is a formal rite, or less often an informal blessing, entering the devotee into renunciate monasticism, binding him for life to certain vows which include chastity, poverty and obedience, and directing him on the path to Self Realization. Strictest tradition requires that lifetime renunciates be single men and that they enter training in their order before age 25. However, there are certain orders which accept men into *sannyāsa* after age 25, provided they have been in college and not in the world after that time. Others will accept widowers, and a few initiate women. Such rules and qualifications apply primarily to cenobites, that is, to those who will live and serve together in an *āśrama* or monastery. The rules pertaining to homeless anchorites are, for obvious reasons, more lenient. See *sannyāsa dharma, videhamukti*.

***Sannyāsa Upanishad* सन्यास उपनिषद्** An *Upanishad* of the *Atharva Veda*. It deals with the transition from the *grihastha* to the *vānaprastha* and *sannyāsa āśramas*.

***sannyāsin* सन्यासिन्** "Renouncer." One who has taken *sannyāsa dikshā*. A Hindu monk, *swāmī*, and one of a world brotherhood (or holy order) of *sannyāsins*. Some are wanderers and others live in monasteries. The seasoned *sannyāsin* is truly the liberated man, the spiritual exemplar, the disciplined *yogī* and ultimately the knower of Truth, freed to commune with the Divine and bound to uplift humanity through the sharing of his wisdom, his peace, his devotion and his illumination, however great or small. The *sannyāsin* is the guardian of his religion, immersed in it constantly, freed from worldliness, freed from distraction, able to offer his work and his worship in unbroken continuity and one-pointed effectiveness. He undertakes certain disciplines including the purification of body, mind and emotion. He restrains and controls the mind through his *sādhana, tapas* and meditative regimen. He unfolds from within himself a profound love of God and the Gods. His practice of *upāsana*, worship, is predominantly internal, seeking God Śiva within. The term *sannyāsin* is usually synonymous with *swāmī*, though the term *swāmī* is sometimes used less specifically to refer to nonrenunciate persons who are doing spiritual work. See *sannyāsa, sannyāsa dharma, sannyāsa dikshā, swāmī*.

**Sanskṛit** संस्कृत "Well-made, perfected" The classical sacerdotal language of ancient India, considered a pure vehicle for communication with the celestial worlds It is the primary language in which Hindu scriptures are written, including the *Vedas* and *Āgamas* Employed today as a liturgical, literary and scholarly language, but no longer used as a spoken tongue  
**sant** सन्त "Saint" A Hindi or vernacular term derived from the Sanskrit *sat*, meaning "truth, reality"

**santosha** सन्तोष "Contentment" See *yama-niyama*.

**śarana** शरण "Refuge" See *Śivaśaranā*, *Vīra Śaivism*

**Sarasvatī** सरस्वती "The flowing one" Śakti, the Universal Mother, Goddess of the arts and learning, mythological consort of the God Brahmā Sarasvatī, the river Goddess, is usually depicted wearing a white *sārī* and holding a *vīna*, sitting upon a swan or lotus flower Prayers are offered to her for refinements of art, culture and learning Sarasvatī also names one of seven sacred rivers (Sapta Sindhu) mentioned in the *Rig Veda*, but which now flows underground In addition, one of the ten *daśanāmī swāmī* orders is the Sarasvatī See *Goddess, Śakti*

**Saravana** शरवण "Thicket of reeds" Mythologically, a sacred Himalayan pond where Lord Kārttikeya was nurtured, esoterically understood as the lake of divine essence, or primal consciousness See *Kārttikeya*

**sārī**: (Hindi, साड़ी) The traditional outer garment of a Hindu woman, consisting of a long, unstitched piece of cloth, usually colorful cotton or silk, wrapped around the body, forming an ankle-length skirt, and around the bosom and over the shoulder

**śarīra** शरीर "Body, husk" Three bodies of the soul 1) *sthūla śarīra*, "gross or physical body" (also called *aṇnamaya kośa*), the odic body, 2) *sūkshma śarīra*, "subtle body" (also called *linga śarīra*, it includes the *prānamaya*, *manomaya* and *vijñānamaya kośas*), 3) *kāraṇa śarīra*, "causal body" (also called *ānandamaya kośa*), the actinic causal body Another term for *śarīra* is *deha* See *deha*, *kośa*, *subtle body*

**sarvabhadra** सर्वभद्र "All is auspicious, the goodness of all" *Bhadra* indicates that which is "blessed, auspicious, dear, excellent" *Sarva* ("all") *bhadra* thus denotes the cognition that everything in the universe is a manifestation of Divinity, that it is holy, good and purposeful See *auspiciousness*, *grace*, *Śivamaya*, *world*.

**Sarvajñānottara Āgama** सर्वज्ञानोत्तर आगम This text is not among the traditional list of *Āgamas* and subsidiary scriptures But it is thought to be a second version of *Kalajñān*, a subsidiary text of *Vātula Āgama* The available sections deal with right knowledge

**śāstra** शास्त्र "Sacred text, teaching" 1) Any religious or philosophical treatise, or body of writings 2) A department of knowledge, a science, e g , the *Dharma Śāstras* on religious law, *Artha Śāstras* on politics

**śāstri** शास्त्री One who is knowledgeable in *śāstra*, or scriptures

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**śāstri.** शास्त्री One who is knowledgeable in *śāstra*, or scriptures

**sat** सत् “True, existing, real, good, reality, existence, truth” See *Satchidānanda*.

**Satan** The devil, evil personified A being who in Christian and other Semitic religions opposes God’s will and tempts souls into wickedness In Hinduism, all is seen as the manifestation of God, and there is no Satan See *asura*, *hell*, *Naraka*

**Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa**. शतपथब्राह्मण “Priest manual of 100 paths” A priestly manual of the *Śukla Yajur Veda*, dealing with theology, philosophy and modes of worship

**Satchidānanda (Sachchidānanda)** सच्चिदानन्द “Existence-consciousness-bliss” A synonym for *Parāśakti* Lord Śiva’s Divine Mind and simultaneously the pure superconscious mind of each individual soul It is perfect love and omniscient, omnipotent consciousness, the fountainhead of all existence, yet containing and permeating all existence It is also called pure consciousness, pure form, substratum of existence, and more One of the goals of the meditator or *yogī* is to experience the natural state of the mind, *Satchidānanda*, holding back the *vṛttis* through *yogic* practices In Advaita Vedānta, *Satchidānanda* is considered a description of the Absolute (Brahman) Whereas in monistic, or *śuddha*, Śaiva Siddhānta it is understood as divine form—pure, amorphous matter or energy—not as an equivalent of the Absolute, formless, “*atattva*,” *Paraśiva* In this latter school, *Paraśiva* is radically transcendent, and *Satchidānanda* is known as the primal and most perfectly divine form to emerge from the formless *Paraśiva*. See *atattva*, *Parāśakti*, *tattva*

**satguru (sadguru)** सद्गुरु “True weighty one” A spiritual preceptor of the highest attainment—one who has realized the ultimate Truth, *Paraśiva*, through *nirvikalpa samādhi*—a *jīvanmukta* able to lead others securely along the spiritual path He is always a *sannyāsīn*, an unmarried renunciate All Hindu denominations teach that the grace and guidance of a living *satguru* is a necessity for Self Realization He is recognized and revered as the embodiment of God, *Sadāśiva*, the source of grace and of liberation See *guru bhakti*, *guru*, *guru-śishya relationship*, *pādapūjā*

**satgurunātha**. सद्गुरुनाथ “Lord and true guru” A highly respectful and honorific term for one’s preceptor See *satguru*

**sattva guna**. सत्त्वगुण “Purity” The quality of goodness or purity See *guna*

**satya**. सत्य “Truthfulness” See *yama-niyama*.

**Satyaloka**. सत्यलोक “Plane of reality, truth” Also called *Brahmaloka*, the realm of *sahasrāra chakra*, it is the highest of the seven upper worlds See *loka*.

**śauca** शौच “Purity” See *purity-impurity*, *yama-niyama*.

**saumanasya** सौमनस्य “Benevolence, causing gladness or cheerfulness of mind, right understanding (related to the term *soma*)” See *chakra*

**savikalpa samādhi** सविक्ल्पसमाधि “Enstasy with form or seed” See *enstasy*, *rāja yoga*, *samādhi*

- sāyujya* सायुज्य "Intimate union" Perpetual God Consciousness See *Sivasāyujya*, *viśvagrāsa*
- scarlet: The color red with orange tint
- scepter: *Rājadanda* The staff and insignia of royal or imperial authority and power held by spiritual monarchs or kings Traditionally, the scepters of Indian kings are prepared and empowered by respected heads of traditional Hindu religious orders through esoteric means See *danda*
- scripture (scriptural) "A writing" A sacred text or holy book having authority for a given sect or religion See *śāstra*, *smṛiti*, *śruti*
- secluded (seclusion) Isolated, hidden Kept apart from others See *muni*
- seed *karma* Dormant or *anārabdha karma* All past actions which have not yet sprouted See *karma*
- seer Visionary, *ṛishi* A wise being or mystic who sees beyond the limits of ordinary perception See *ākāśa*, *clairvoyance*, *muni*, *ṛishi*, *shamanism*
- Self (Self God) God Śiva's perfection of Absolute Reality, Paraśiva—That which abides at the core of every soul See *atattva*, *Paramātmān*, *Paraśiva*
- self-assertive Quality of one who makes himself, his ideas, opinions, etc., dominant Demanding recognition
- self-conceit. Too high an opinion of oneself, vanity, vain pride
- self-luminous Producing its own light, radiating light
- Self Realization Direct knowing of the Self God, Paraśiva Self Realization is known in Sanskrit as *nirvikalpa samādhi*, "ecstasy without form or seed," the ultimate spiritual attainment (also called *asamprajñata samādhi*) Esoterically, this state is attained when the mystic *kundalīnī* force pierces through the *sahasrāra chakra* at the crown of the head This transcendence of all modes of human consciousness brings the realization or "nonexperience" of That which exists beyond the mind, beyond time, form and space But even to assign a name to Paraśiva, or to its realization is to name that which cannot be named In fact, it is "experienced" only in its aftermath as a change in perspective, a permanent transformation, and as an intuitive familiarity with the Truth that surpasses understanding See *God Realization*, *ecstasy*, *liberation*, *kundalīnī*, *Paraśiva*, *rāja yoga*, *samādhi*
- self-reflection Observation of, or meditation upon, oneself, one's mind, emotions, thinking Introspection Playing back memories and impressions locked within the subconscious, endeavoring to deal with them It is anticipating one's future and how the past will react upon it, enhance or detract from it. See *spiritual unfoldment*
- servitude Condition of a slave subject to a master
- sevā*. सेवा "Service" *Karma yoga*. An integral part of the spiritual path, where the aspirant strives to serve without thought of reward or personal gain The central practice of the *charyā pāda*. See *yoga*
- seval*. ཇེའལ The large, red, fighting rooster (*kukkuṭa* in Sanskrit) that adorns Lord Murugan's flag, heralding the dawn of wisdom and the conquest



of the forces of ignorance See *Kārttikeya*

**sexuality** Hinduism has a healthy, unrepressed outlook on human sexuality, and sexual pleasure is part of *kāma*, one of the four goals of life. On matters such as birth control, sterilization, masturbation, homosexuality, bisexuality, petting and polygamy, Hindu scripture is tolerantly silent, neither calling them sins nor encouraging their practice, neither condemning nor condoning. The two important exceptions to this understanding view of sexual experience are adultery and abortion, both of which are considered to carry heavy *karmic* implications for this and future births. See *abortion, bisexuality, homosexuality*

**ṣaḍ darśana षड् दर्शन** "Six views or insights, six philosophies" Among the hundreds of Hindu *darśanas* known through history are six classical philosophical systems: Nyāya, Vaiśeṣhika, Sāṅkhya, Yoga, Mīmāṃsā and Vedānta. Each was tersely formulated in *sūtra* form by its "founder," and elaborated in extensive commentaries by other writers. They are understood as varied attempts at describing Truth and the path to it. Elements of each form part of the Hindu fabric today. —**Nyāya** "System, rule, logic" A system of logical realism, founded sometime around 300 BCE by Gautama, known for its systems of logic and epistemology and concerned with the means of acquiring right knowledge. Its tools of enquiry and rules for argumentation were adopted by all schools of Hinduism. —**Vaiśeṣhika** "Distinctionism" From "*viśeṣa*," differences. Philosophy founded by Kanāda (ca 300 BCE) teaching that liberation is to be attained through understanding the nature of existence, which is classified in nine basic realities (*dravyas*)—earth, water, light, air, ether, time, space, soul and mind. Nyāya and Vaiśeṣhika are viewed as a complementary pair, with Nyāya emphasizing logic, and Vaiśeṣhika analyzing the nature of the world. —**Sāṅkhya** "Enumeration, reckoning" A philosophy founded by the sage Kapila (ca 500 BCE), author of the *Sāṅkhya Sūtras*. Sāṅkhya is primarily concerned with "categories of existence," *tattvas*, which it understands as 25 in number. The first two are the unmanifest *puruṣa* and the manifest primal nature, *prakṛiti*—the male-female polarity, viewed as the foundation of all existence. *Prakṛiti*, out of which all things evolve, is the unity of the three *guṇas*—*sattva*, *rajas* and *taṃas*. Sāṅkhya and Yoga are considered an inseparable pair whose principles permeate all of Hinduism. See *prakṛiti, puruṣa*. —**Yoga** "Yoking, joining" Ancient tradition of philosophy and practice codified by Patañjali (ca 200 BCE) in the *Yoga Sūtras*. It is also known as *rāja yoga*, "king of *yogas*," or *aṣṭāṅga yoga*, "eight-limbed *yoga*." Its object is to achieve, at will, the cessation of all fluctuations of consciousness, and the attainment of Self-Realization. Yoga is wholly dedicated to putting the high philosophy of Hinduism into practice, to achieve personal transformation through transcendental experience, *saṃādhi*. See *yoga*. —**Mīmāṃsā** "Inquiry" (or *Pūrva*, "early," *Mīmāṃsā*) Founded by Jaimini (ca 200 BCE),

author of the *Mīmāṃsā Sūtras*, who taught the correct performance of Vedic rites as the means to salvation — *Vedānta* (or Uttara “later” *Mīmāṃsā*) “End (or culmination) of the *Vedas*” For *Vedānta*, the main basis is the *Upamishads* and *Āranyakas* (the “end,” *anta*, of the *Vedas*), rather than the hymns and ritual portions of the *Vedas* The teaching of *Vedānta* is that there is one Absolute Reality, Brahman Man is one with Brahman, and the object of life is to realize that truth through right knowledge, intuition and personal experience The *Vedānta Sūtras* (or *Brahma Sūtras*) were composed by Rishi Bādarāyana (ca 400 BCE) See *Brahma Sūtra*, *padārtha*, *tattva*, *Vedānta*, *yoga*

**shamanism** (shamanic) From the Sanskrit *śramana*, “ascetic,” akin to *śram*, meaning to exert” Generally refers to any religion based on the belief that good or evil spirits can be influenced by priests, or shamans Descriptive of many of the world’s tribal, indigenous faiths See *folk-shamanic*, *pagan*, *incantation*, *mysticism*, *Śāktism*

**shanmata sthāpanāchārya** षण्मतस्थापनाचार्य “Founder-teacher of the six-fold system” A title conferred upon Ādi Śankara while he was living It refers to his attempt to consolidate the six main sects of Hinduism in non-sectarian unity, as represented by its altar of five (or six) Deities See *Smārtism*, *pañchāyatana pūjā*, *Śankara*.

**Shanmukha**. षण्मुख “Six-faced” A name for Lord Murugan or Kārttikeya, denoting the multiplicity of His divine functions See *Kārttikeya*

**Shanmukha Gāyatrī** षण्मुखगायत्री A Vedic Gāyatrī chant, the Sāvitrī Gāyatrī modified to address Lord Kārttikeya as Shanmukha “He of six faces”

**shashtyabda pūrti** षष्ट्यब्दपूर्ति “Sixtieth birthday celebration” Done for the couple on the husband’s birthday, usually with many family and friends attending It consists in a *homa*, retaking of marriage vows and retying the wedding pendant

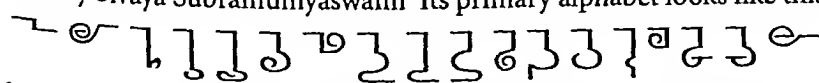
**shaṭkona**. षट्कोण “Six-pointed star,” formed by two interlocking triangles, the upper one representing Śiva’s transcendent Being, and the lower one Śiva’s manifest energy, Śakti The *shaṭkona* is part of Lord Kārttikeya’s *yantra* See *Ardhanārīśvara Kārttikeya*

**shaṭsthala**. षट्स्थल “Six stages” Vira Śaivism’s six stages to union with Śiva See *Vira Śaivism*

**shatter** To break into many pieces suddenly, as if struck

**sheath** A covering or recepticle, such as the husk surrounding a grain of rice In Sanskrit, it is *kośa*, philosophically the bodily envelopes of the soul See *kośa*, *soul*, *subtle body*

**Shum**. A Nātha mystical language of meditation revealed in Switzerland in 1968 by Sivaya Subramuniyaswami Its primary alphabet looks like this



**shuttle**. An instrument that carries a spool of thread in the weaving of cloth

**siddha.** सिद्ध A “perfected one” or accomplished *yogī*, a person of great spiritual attainment or powers See *siddhi*, *siddha yoga*, *siddha yogī*

**Siddha Mārga** सिद्धमार्ग Another term for *Siddha Siddhānta* See *Siddha Siddhānta*, *siddha yoga*

**siddhānta.** सिद्धान्त “Final attainments or conclusions” *Siddhānta* refers to ultimate understanding arrived at in any given field of knowledge

**Siddha Siddhānta Paddhati** सिद्धसिद्धान्तपद्धति “Tracks on the doctrines of the adepts” A text of 353 highly mystical verses ascribed to Gorakshanātha, founder of the *Siddha Siddhānta* school of Śaivism Deals with the esoteric nature of the inner bodies and the soul’s union with Supreme Reality See *Gorakshanātha*, *Siddha Siddhānta*

**Siddha Siddhānta** सिद्धसिद्धान्त *Siddha Siddhānta*, also called *Gorakhnātha* Śaivism, is generally considered to have come in the lineage of the earlier ascetic orders of India Its most well-known preceptor was *Gorakshanātha* (ca 1000) a disciple of *Matsyendranātha*, patron saint of Nepal, revered by certain esoteric Buddhist schools as well as by Hindus The school systematized and developed the practice of *haṭha yoga* to a remarkable degree Indeed, nearly all of what is today taught about *haṭha yoga* comes from this school Among its central texts are *Haṭha Yoga Pradīpikā* by Svātmarāma, *Gheraṇḍa Samhitā*, *Śiva Samhitā* and *Jñānāmṛta* *Siddha Siddhānta* theology embraces both transcendent Śiva (being) and immanent Śiva (becoming) Śiva is both the efficient and material cause of the universe Devotion is expressed through temple worship and pilgrimage, with the central focus on internal worship and *kundalinī yoga*, with the goal of realizing *Parāsamvid*, the supreme transcendent state of Śiva Today there are perhaps 750,000 adherents of *Siddha Siddhānta* Śaivism, who are often understood as Śāktas or *advaita tantrics* The school fans out through India, but is most prominent in North India and Nepal Devotees are called *yogīs*, and stress is placed on world renunciation—even for householders This sect is also most commonly known as *Nātha*, the *Gorakshapantha* and *Siddha Yogī Sampradāya* Other names include *Ādinātha Sampradāya*, *Nāthamaṭha* and *Siddhamārga* See *Gorakshanātha*

**siddha yoga** सिद्धयोग “Yoga of perfected attainment, or of supernatural powers” 1) A term used in the *Tirumantram* and other Śaiva scriptures to describe the *yoga* which is the way of life of adepts after the attainment of *Parāśiva* *Siddha yoga* involves the development of magical or mystical powers, or *siddhis*, including some or all of the eight classical powers It is a highly advanced *yoga* which seeks profound transformation of body, mind and emotions and the ability to live in a flawless state of God Consciousness 2) The highly accomplished practices of certain alchemists See *siddha yogī*, *siddhi*

**siddha yogī** सिद्धयोगी “Yogī of perfection” A perfected one, adept, a realized being who is the embodiment of the most profound *yogic* states and has

- attained magical or mystical powers See *siddha yoga*, *siddhi*
- Siddha Yogī Sampradāya** सिद्धयोगीसंप्रदाय Another term for *Siddha Siddhānta*. See *Siddha Siddhānta*.
- siddhānta śravaṇa** (or *śrāvana*) सिद्धान्तश्रवण "Scriptural listening" See *yama-niyama*
- siddhi** सिद्धि "Power, accomplishment, perfection" Extraordinary powers of the soul, developed through consistent meditation and deliberate, grueling, often uncomfortable *tapas*, or awakened naturally through spiritual maturity and *yogic sādhanā* Through the repeated experience of Self Realization, *siddhis* naturally unfold according to the needs of the individual Before Self Realization, the use or development of *siddhis* is among the greatest obstacles on the path, because it develops the *ahamkāra*, I-ness, and militates against the attainment of *prapatti*, complete submission to the will of God, Gods and *guru* Six *siddhis* in particular are considered primary obstacles in the way of *samādhi* clairvoyance (*ādarśa siddhi* or *divya siddhi*), clairaudience (*śravaṇa siddhi* or *divyaśravaṇa*), divination (*pratibhā siddhi*), super-feeling (*vedana siddhi*) and super-taste (*āsvādana siddhi*), super-smell (*vārtā siddhi*) The supreme *siddhi* (*parasiddhi*) is realization of the Self, Paraśiva See *siddha yoga*
- śikhara** शिखर "Summit or crest" The towering superstructure above the *garbhagriha* in North Indian style temples In Southern temples, *śikhara* refers to the top stone of the superstructure, or *vimāna*
- Sikhism** "Disciple" Religion of nine million members founded in India about 500 years ago by the saint Guru Nānak A reformist faith which rejects idolatry and the caste system, its holy book is the *Ādi Granth*, and main holy center is the Golden Temple of Amritsar See *Ādi Granth*
- Śikshā Vedāṅga** शिक्षावेदाङ्ग Auxiliary Vedic texts on Sanskrit phonetics (pronunciation, articulation and accent), among four linguistic skills taught for mastery of the *Vedas* and the rites of *yajña* *Śikshā* literally means "wish to accomplish, learning, method of study" The *Prātisākhya*s, phonetic handbooks developed by ancient Vedic schools, and a later text by Pāṇini are of this class See *Vedāṅga*
- Śilpa Śāstra** शिल्पशास्त्र "Art or craft manual" १) A particular class of works which formed the primary teachings on any of the fine arts or sacred sciences, such as architecture, dance, painting, jewelry-making, pottery, weaving, and basketry, garlandry, metal-working, acting, cooking and horsemanship The earliest *Śilpa Śāstras* are thought to date to 200 BCE Many were written between the 5th and 14th centuries See *kalā*—64, *Sthāpatya-veda śimantonnayana*. सीमन्तोन्नयन "Hair-parting rite" See *samskāras of birth*
- sin** Intentional transgression of divine law Akin to the Latin *sous*, "guilty" Hinduism does not view sin as a crime against God, but as an act against *dharma*—moral order—and one's own self It is thought natural, if unfortunate, that young souls act wrongly, for they are living in nescience, *avidyā*,

the darkness of ignorance Sin is an *adharmic* course of action which automatically brings negative consequences The term *sin* carries a double meaning, as do its Sanskrit equivalents 1) a wrongful act, 2) the negative consequences resulting from a wrongful act. In Sanskrit the wrongful act is known by several terms, including *pātaka* (from *pat*, “to fall”) *pāpa*, *enas*, *kilbisha*, *adharma*, *anṛita* and *ṛina* (transgress, in the sense of omission) The residue of sin is called *pāpa*, sometimes conceived of as a sticky, astral substance which can be dissolved through penance (*prāyaścitta*), austerity (*tapas*) and good deeds (*sukṛityā*) This astral substance can be psychically seen within the inner, subconscious aura of the individual Note that *pāpa* is also accrued through unknowing or unintentional transgressions of *dharma*, as in the term *aparādha* (offense, fault, mistake) —**inherent (or original) sin** A doctrine of Semitic faiths whereby each soul is born in sin as a result of Adam’s disobedience in the Garden of Eden Sometimes mistakenly compared to the Śaiva Siddhānta concept of the three *malas*, especially *ānava* See *pāśa* —**mortal sin** According to some theologies, sins so grave that they can never be expiated and which cause the soul to be condemned to suffer eternally in hell In Hinduism, there are no such concepts as *inherent* or *mortal sin* See *aura*, *evil*, *karma*, *pāpa*.

**śiṣya** शिष्य “A pupil or disciple,” especially one who has proven himself and has formally been accepted by a *guru*.

**Śiva** शिव “The auspicious, gracious or kindly one” Supreme Being of the Śaivite religion God Śiva is All and in all, simultaneously the creator and the creation, both immanent and transcendent As personal Deity, He is creator, preserver and destroyer He is a one being, perhaps best understood in three perfections Parameśvara (Primal Soul), Parāśakti (pure consciousness) and Paraśiva (Absolute Reality) See *Ishta Devatā*, *Parameśvara*, *Parāśakti*, *Paraśiva*, *Naṭarāja*, *Sadāśiva*, *Śaivism*, *Satchidānanda*.

**Śiva Advaita** शिवैकत Also called Śiva Viśiṣṭādvaita, or Śaivite “qualified nondualism,” Śiva Advaita is the philosophy of Śrīkanṭha (ca 1050) as expounded in his commentary on the *Brahma Sūtras* (ca 500-200 BCE) Patterned after the Vaiṣṇavite Viśiṣṭādvaita of Rāmānuja, this philosophy was later amplified by Appaya Dikshita Brahman, or Śiva, is transcendent and the efficient and material cause of the world and souls Souls are not identical to Him and never merge in Him, even after liberation As a school Śiva Advaita remained exclusively intellectual, never enjoying a following of practitioners Purification, devotion and meditation upon Śiva as the Self—the *ākāśa* within the heart—define the path Meditation is directed to the Self, Śiva, the One Existence that evolved into all form Liberation depends on grace, not deeds See *Appaya Dikshita*, *Śaivism*, *Śrīkanṭha*

**Śivachaitanya** शिवचैतन्य “God consciousness” See *Śiva consciousness*

**Śivāchāra** शिवाचार “Treating all as God” See *Vīra Śaivism*

**Śivāchārya** शिवाचार्य The hereditary priests of the Śaiva Siddhānta tradition

The title of Ādiśaiva Brāhmins An Ādiśaiva priest who has received the necessary training and *dikshās* to perform public Śiva temple rites known as Āgamic *nitya parārthā pūjā* A fully qualified Śivāchārya is also known as *archaka Śivāchārya*, too, names the family clan of this priest tradition See *Ādiśaiva brāhmin*

Śiva consciousness Śivachaitanya A broad term naming the experience or state of being conscious of Śiva in a multitude of ways, such as in the five expressed in the following meditation Vital Breath *prāṇa*. Experience the inbreath and outbreath as Śiva's will within your body Become attuned to the ever-present pulse of the universe, knowing that nothing moves but by His divine will All-Pervasive Energy *śakti* Become conscious of the flow of life within your body Realize that it is the same universal energy within every living thing Practice seeing the life energy within another's eyes Manifest Sacred Form *darśana* Hold in your mind a sacred form, such as Natarāja, Śivalinga or your *satguru*—who is Sadāśiva—and think of nothing else See every form as a form of our God Śiva Inner Light *jyoti* Observe the light that illumines your thoughts Concentrate only on that light, as you might practice being more aware of the light on a TV screen than of its changing pictures Sacred Sound. *nāda*. Listen to the constant high-pitched *ee*sounding in your head It is like the tone of an electrical transformer, a hundred *tamburas* distantly playing or a humming swarm of bees

These five constitute the "Śivachaitanya Pañchatantra," five simple experiences that bring the Divine into the reach of each individual Śivachaitanya, of course, applies to deeper states of meditation and contemplation as well See *jñāna, mind (five states), Śivasāyujya*

Śiva Dṛishti शिवदृष्टि A scripture of Kāshmir Śaivism, now lost, written by Somānanda, a disciple of Vasugupta See *Kāshmir Śaivism*

Śivasjñānabodham शिवज्ञानबोधम् "Treatise on Śiva Wisdom" A work authored (or, some believe, a portion of the *Raurava Āgama* translated into Tamil) by Meykandar, ca 1300, consisting of 12 *sūtras* describing the relationship between God, soul and world The Meykandar Sampradāya revere it as their primary philosophical text, and consider it a pluralistic exposition For others, it is monistic in character, the pluralistic interpretation being introduced by later commentators Included in this important text is an acute commentary on each of the 12 *sūtras* See *Meykandar Sāstras*

Śivakarnāmṛta. शिवकर्णामृत A text by Appaya Dikshita (1554–1626) written to reestablish the superiority of God Śiva in the face of widespread conversion to Vaiṣṇavism See *Appaya Dikshita*

Śivālaya: शिवालय The holy Śiva temple "Śiva's house or dwelling (*ālaya*)" See *temple*.

Śivalinga. शिवलिङ्ग "Mark, or sign, of Śiva" The most prevalent icon of Śiva, found in virtually all Śiva temples A rounded, elliptical, aniconic image, usually set on a circular base, or *pīṭha* The Śivalinga is the simplest and

most ancient symbol of Śiva, especially of Paraśiva, God beyond all forms and qualities. The *pīṭha* represents Parāśakti, the manifesting power of God. Lingas are usually of stone (either carved or naturally existing, *svayambhū*, such as shaped by a swift-flowing river), but may also be of metal, precious gems, crystal, wood, earth or transitory materials such as ice. According to the *Kāraṇa Āgama* (6), a transitory Śivalinga may be made of 12 different materials: sand, rice, cooked food, river clay, cow dung, butter, *rudrāksha* seeds, ashes, sandalwood, *dharba* grass, a flower garland or molasses. See *mūrti*, *Śaivism*, *svayambhū Linga*.

**Śivaloka.** शिवलोक “Realm of Śiva.” See *loka*.

**Śivamaya.** शिवमय “Formed, made, consisting of or full of Śiva.” Denotes that all of existence—all worlds, all beings, all of manifestation, that which undergoes creation, preservation and destruction, all dualities and paradoxes—consists of and is pervaded by Śiva. An important concept of monistic Śaivism. See *sarvabhadra*, *world*, *tattva*.

**Śivamayakośa.** शिवमयकोश “Sheath composed of Śiva.” Names the Primal Soul form, Parameśvara—the body of God Śiva—into which the individual soul merges as the fulfillment of its evolution. See *kośa*, *Parameśvara*, *viśvagrāsa*.

**Śivanadiyar.** சிவனடியார் “Slave of Śiva.” Conveys a mystic relationship between the devotee and Śiva in which all spiritual, mental and physical actions are perceived as fulfilling the will and design of Śiva. See *karma yoga*.

**Śivaness.** Quality of being Śiva or like Śiva, especially sharing in His divine state of consciousness. See *samarasa*, *Śiva consciousness*, *Śivasāyujya*.

**Śivānubhava Mandapa.** शिवानुभवमण्डप The “hall of Śiva experience,” where the Vīra Śaivites gathered to develop the basic doctrines of the movement in the 12th century.

**Śiva Purāṇa.** शिवपुराण “Ancient [lore] of Śiva.” 1) A collection of six major scriptures sacred to Śaivites. 2) The name of the oldest of these six texts, though some consider it a version of the *Vāyu Purāṇa*.

**Śiva Rakshāmaṇi Dīpikā.** शिवरक्षामणिदीपिका A purely nondual commentary and interpretation by Appaya Dīkshita (1554–1626) on the writings of Śrīkaṇṭha. See *Śaivism*.

**Śivarātri.** शिवरात्रि “Night of Śiva.” See *Mahāśivarātri*.

**Śiva-Śakti.** शिवशक्ति Father-Mother God, both immanent and transcendent. A name for God Śiva encompassing His unmanifest Being and manifest energy. See *Ardhanārīśvara*, *Parameśvara*, *Primal Soul*, *Śiva*.

**Śiva Samhitā.** शिवसहिता Text from the Gorakshanātha school of Śaivism, ca. 1700. In 212 *sūtras* it discusses anatomy, *āsanas*, energy, breathing and philosophy. It is available in various languages and widely studied as a valuable overview of *yoga* practice.

**Śivaśaranā.** शिवशरणा “One surrendered in God.” See *Vīra Śaivism*.

**Śivasāyujya.** शिवसायुज्य “Intimate union with Śiva.” Becoming one with

**God** The state of perpetual Śiva consciousness, simultaneous perception of the inner and the outer. A permanent state of oneness with Śiva, even in the midst of ordinary activities, the aftermath or plateau which comes after repeated Self Realization experiences. Rishi Tirumular says "Sāyujya is the state of *jagrātita*—the 'Beyond Consciousness'. Sāyujya is to abide forever in *upaśanta*, the peace that knows no understanding. Sāyujya is to become Śiva Himself. Sāyujya is to experience the infinite power of inward bliss forever and ever (Tirumantiram 1513)." In many Hindu schools of thought it is defined as the highest attainment. Esoterically, it dawns when the *kundalinī* resides coiled in the *sahasrāra chakra*. See *jīvanmukti*, *kaivalya*, *kundalinī*, *moksha*.

**Śiva's five faces** See *Sadāśiva*.

**Śiva Sūtra(s)** शिवसूत्र The seminal or seed scripture of Kashmir Śaivism, 77 aphorisms revealed to Sage Vasugupta (ca 800). See *Vasugupta*.

**Sivathondan** சிவதொண்டன "Servant of Śiva." Conveys the same mystic meaning as *Sivanadiyar*, denoting a devotee who regularly performs actions dedicated to God Śiva, selfless work in service to others. See *karma yoga*.

**Sivathondu** சிவதொண்டு "Service to Śiva." Akin to the concept of *karma yoga*. See *karma yoga*.

**Sivāya Namah** शिवाय नमः "Adoration to Śiva." Alternate form of *Namah*.

*Sivāya* See *Namahi Sivāya*.

**Sivena saha Nartanam** शिवेन सह नर्तनम् "Dancing with Śiva."

**Skanda** स्कन्द "Quicksilver, leaping one." One of Lord Kārttikeya's oldest names, and His form as scarlet-hued warrior God. See *Kārttikeya*.

**Skanda Shashthi** स्कन्दषष्ठी A six-day festival in October-November celebrating Lord Kārttikeya's, or Skanda's, victory over the forces of darkness.

**sloka** श्लोक A verse, phrase, proverb or hymn of praise, usually composed in a specified meter. Especially a verse of two lines, each of sixteen syllables.

**Sloka** is the primary verse form of the Sanskrit epics, *Mahābhārata* and

*Rāmāyana*. See *bhāṣya*, *sūtra*.

**Smārta** स्मार्त "Of or related to *smṛiti*," the secondary Hindu scriptures. See

*Smārtism*, *smṛiti*.

**Smārta Sampradāya** स्मार्तसंप्रदाय The teaching tradition of Hinduism's Smārta sect, formalized by Ādi Śankara in the 9th century. See *Smārtism*.

**Smārtism** स्मार्त "Sect based on the secondary scriptures (*smṛiti*). The most liberal of the four major denominations of Hinduism, an ancient Vedic *brāhminical* tradition (ca 700 BCE) which from the 9th century onward was guided and deeply influenced by the Advaita Vedānta teachings of the reformed Ādi Śankara. Its adherents rely mainly on the classical *smṛiti* literature, especially the *Itihāsas* (*Rāmāyana* and *Mahābhārata*, the latter of which includes the *Bhagavad Gītā*), *Purānas* and *Dharma Śāstras*. These are regarded as complementary to and a means to understanding the *Vedas*.



Smārtas adhere to Śankara's view that all Gods are but various depictions of Saguna Brahman. Thus, Smārtas are avowedly eclectic, worshipping all the Gods and discouraging sectarianism. The Smārta system of worship, called *pañchāyatana pūjā*, reinforces this outlook by including the major Deity of each primary Hindu sect of ancient days: Gaṇeśa, Sūrya, Vishnu, Śiva and Śakti. In order to encompass a sixth important lineage, Śankara recommended the addition of a sixth Deity, Kumāra. Thus he was proclaimed *shanmata sthapanāchārya*, founder of the six-fold system. One among the six is generally chosen as the devotee's preferred Deity, *Iṣṭa Devatā*. For spiritual authority, Smārtas look to the regional monasteries established across India by Śankara, and to their pontiffs. These are the headquarters of ten orders of renunciate monks who spread the Advaita Vedānta teachings far and wide. Within Smārtism three primary religious approaches are distinguished: ritualistic, devotional and philosophical. See *daśanāmī*, *pañchāyatana pūjā*, *Śankara*.

**smṛiti** स्मृति "That which is remembered, the tradition." Hinduism's nonrevealed, secondary but deeply revered scriptures, derived from man's insight and experience. *Smṛiti* speaks of secular matters—science, law, history, agriculture, etc.—as well as spiritual lore, ranging from day-to-day rules and regulations to superconscious outpourings. 1) The term *smṛiti* refers to a specific collection of ancient Sanskrit texts as follows: the six or more *Vedāngas*, the four *Upavedas*, the two *Itihāsas*, and the 18 main *Purāṇas*. Among the *Vedāngas*, the *Kalpa Vedānga* defines codes of ritual in the *Śrauta* and *Sulba Sāstras*, and domestic-civil laws in the *Gṛhya* and *Dharma Sāstras*. Also included as classical *smṛiti* are the founding *sūtras* of six ancient philosophies called *śad darśana* (Śāṅkhya, Yoga, Nyāya, Vaiśeṣika, Mīmamsā and Vedānta). 2) In a general sense, *smṛiti* may refer to any text other than *śruti* (revealed scripture) that is revered as scripture within a particular sect. From the vast body of sacred literature, *sāstra*, each sect and school claims its own preferred texts as secondary scripture, e.g., the *Rāmāyana* of Vaiṣṇavism and Smārtism, or the *Tirumurai* of Śaiva Siddhānta. Thus, the selection of *smṛiti* varies widely from one sect and lineage to another. See *Mahābhārata*, *Rāmāyana*, *Tirumurai*.

**snare** A trap for catching animals.

**social dharma.** (*varna dharma*) See *dharma*.

**solace.** A comforting or easing of distress, pain or sorrow.

**solemn.** Observed or performed according to ritual or tradition. Formal, serious, inspiring feelings of awe.—**solemnize.** To consecrate with formal ceremony. See *sacrament*, *samskāra*.

**soliloquy.** An act of speaking to oneself.

**solitaire (solitary)** A hermit. One who lives alone and away from all human company.

**Somānanda** सोमानन्द Disciple of Vasugupta and author of *Śivadr̥ṣṭi* (ca

850–900), which was said to be a highly influential explanation and defense of the Kashmir Śaiva philosophy See *Kashmīr Śaivism*

**Somanāthi Temple.** सोमनाथ Ancient center of Pāśupata Śaivism located in modern Gujarat state and mentioned in the *Mahābhārata* The first recorded temple was built there before 100 In 1026 the then fabulously wealthy temple was sacked by Muslim invaders, the Śivalinga smashed and 50,000 *brāhmins* slaughtered The temple was rebuilt several times and finally demolished by the Moghul emperor Aurangzeb (ca 1700) Sardar Patel, deputy prime minister of India, spearheaded its reconstruction in 1947

**soul** The real being of man, as distinguished from body, mind and emotions The soul—known as *ātman* or *purusha*—is the sum of its two aspects, the form or body of the soul and the essence of the soul (though many texts use the word *soul* to refer to the essence only) —essence or nucleus of the soul Man's innermost and unchanging being—Pure Consciousness (*Parāśakti* or *Satchidānanda*) and Absolute Reality (*Paraśiva*) This essence was never created, does not change or evolve and is eternally identical with God Śiva's perfections of *Parāśakti* and *Paraśiva* —soul body *ānandamaya kośa* ("sheath of bliss"), also referred to as the "causal body" (*kāraṇa śarīra*), "innermost sheath" and "body of light" *Body of the soul*, or *soul body*, names the soul's manifest nature as an individual being—an effulgent, human-like form composed of light (quantums) It is the emanational creation of God Śiva, destined to one day merge back into Him During its evolution, the soul functions through four types of outer sheaths that envelope the soul form—mental, instinctive-intellectual, vital and physical—and employs the mental faculties of *manas*, *buddhi* and *ahamkāra*, as well as the five agents of perception (*jñānendriyas*), and five agents of action (*karmendriyas*) The "soul body" is not a body in sense of a case, a vessel, vehicle or enclosure for something else The soul body is the soul itself—a radiant, self-effulgent, human-like, super-intelligent being Its very composition is *Satchidānanda* in various subtle levels of manifestation It is the finest of subatomic forms, on the quantum level The soul form evolves as its consciousness evolves, becoming more and more refined until finally it is the same intensity or refinement as the Primal Soul, *Paramēśvara* The experiences of life, in all the various planes of consciousness, are "food for the soul," reaping lessons that actually raise the level of intelligence and divine love Thus, very refined souls, whether embodied or in the disembodied, *ajīva*, state, are like walking intelligences with inventive creativeness and powers of preservation, beaming with love and luminosity in their self-effulgent bodies of quantum light particles See *ātman*, *evolution of the soul*, *indriya*, *kośa*, *Parāśakti*, *Paraśiva*, *purusha*, *quantum*, *Satchidānanda*, *spiritual unfoldment*

**sound** *Śabda* As the *darsana*, or "seeing," of the Divine is a central article of faith for Hindus, similarly, *hearing* the Divine is spiritually indispensable

The ears are a center of many *nādis* connected to inner organs of perception. *Gurus* may when imparting initiation whisper in the ear of disciples to stimulate these centers and give a greater effect to their instructions. During temple *pūjā*, bells ring loudly, drums resound, conches and woodwinds blare to awaken worshipers from routine states of consciousness. Meditation on inner sound, called *nāda-anusandhāna*, is an essential *yoga* practice. Listening to the *Vedas* or other scripture is a contemplative, mystical process. Traditional music is revered as the nectar of the Divine. See *Aum*, *nāda*, *Śiva consciousness*.

**Soundless Sound** *Paranāda*. See *nāda*.

**sovereign** Greatest, above or superior to all others. Ruling, supreme in rank or authority.

**sow** To scatter or plant, as seeds for cultivation, disseminate, propagate.

**span** To stretch across or over, as a bridge spans a river. To cover or take in the whole of something.

**Spanda Kārikā**. स्पन्दकारिका. A commentary of 52 verses by Vasugupta on the *Śiva Sūtras*. Also called the *Spanda Sūtras*. See *Vasugupta*, *Vīra Śaivism*.

**spark**. A small burning piece of matter, usually thrown off by a fire. A tiny beginning. To stir or activate.

**spectrum**. A series of colored bands which blend one into the other so as to include the entire range of colors, as a rainbow. The entire range of variations of anything, as in the spectrum of all possible emotions.

**speculate (speculation)**. To conjecture, reflect, think or meditate on a subject. See *meditation*, *self-reflection*.

**sphaṭika**. स्फटिक. "Quartz crystal." From *sphaṭ*, "to expand, blossom, to burst open or into view." See *sphaṭika Śivalinga*.

**sphaṭika Śivalinga**. स्फटिकशिवलिङ्ग. "Crystal mark of God." A quartz-crystal *Śivalinga*. See *San Mārga Sanctuary*, *Śivalinga*, *Svayambhū Linga*.

**sphere**. A world. The area, place, the extent or range or action, experience or influence. See *loka*, *world*.

**Spinoza, Baruch**. German philosopher (1632-1677) who taught a monistic pantheism of one infinite substance, God or nature.

**spiritual evolution**. *Adhyātma prasāra*. See *adhyātma prasāra*, *evolution of the soul*.

**spiritual unfoldment**. *Adhyātma vikāsa*. The unfoldment of the spirit, the inherent, divine soul of man. The very gradual expansion of consciousness as *kundalinī śakti* slowly rises through the *sushumnā*. The term *spiritual unfoldment* indicates this slow, imperceptible process, likened to a lotus flower's emerging from bud to effulgent beauty. Contrasted with *development*, which implies intellectual study, or *growth*, which implies character building and *sādhana*. Sound intellect and good character are the foundation for spiritual unfoldment, but they are not the unfoldment itself. When philosophical training and *sādhana* is complete, the *kundalinī* rises safely and

imperceptively, without jerks, twitches, tears or hot flashes Brings greater willpower, compassion and perceptive qualities See *adhyātma vikāsa*, *kuṇḍalinī*, *liberation*, *pāda*, *sādhana*, *sādhana mārga*, *San Mārga*, *tapas* splendor (splendid) Great brightness, magnificent in richness, beauty or character Grandeur

spouse. A partner in a marriage, a husband or wife

*śraddhā* श्रद्धा "Faith, belief" See *pañcha śraddhā*

*śrāddha* श्राद्ध Relating to commemorative ceremonies for the deceased, held one week, one month after death, and annually thereafter, according to tradition See *death*, *bone-gathering*, *pinda*, *saṁskāras of later life*.

*śraddhādhārana* श्रद्धाधारणा "Collection or concentration of faith or belief" A term used in *Dancing with Śiva* for *creed*, a concise synopsis of religious doctrine See *creed*, *faith*

*śrauta* श्रौत "Related to hearing, audible" That which is prescribed by or conforms with the *Vedas*

*Śrauta Sāstra* श्रौतशास्त्र "Texts on the revelation" 1) Refers to scriptures or teachings that are in agreement with the *Vedas* 2) A specific group of texts of the *Kalpa Vedāṅga*, and part of the essential study for Vedic priests The *Śrauta Sāstras* offer explanation of the *yajña* rituals See *Vedāṅga*

*śrī* श्री "Radiant, beautiful, majestic, prosperous" An honorific prefix meaning "sacred, holy," often attached to the names of Deities (as in Śrī Gaṇeśa), to the names of scriptural works, and to the names of eminent persons, similar to the English *reverend* or, more commonly, *Mr* (the feminine equivalent is *śrīmātī*)

*Śrī Chakra* श्रीचक्र See *yantra*

*Śrī Lankā* श्रीलङ्का लंका "Venerable lion" Island country off the south-east tip of India, formerly called Ceylon, 80% Buddhist, home to several million Tamil Śaivites who live mostly in the arid north It was a British colony until independence in 1948 as a member of the Commonwealth, became a republic in 1972, 25,000 square miles, 15 million population

*Śrīkaṇṭha* श्रीकण्ठ A saint and philosopher (ca 1050) who promoted a Śaivite theology which embraced monism and dualism Founder of the Śaiva school called Śiva Advaita, or Śiva Viśiṣṭādvaita, teaching a "Śaivite qualified nondualism," resembling Rāmānuja's Vaiṣṇavite Viśiṣṭādvaita He was also known as Nilakaṇṭha Śivāchārya See *Śiva Advaita*

*Śrīkumāra* श्रीकुमार Monistic Śaiva Siddhānta philosopher (ca 1050) who refuted the Śāṅkaran Vedānta doctrine of *māyā* as illusion and expounded that Śiva is both material cause (*upādāna kāraṇa*) and efficient cause (*nimitta kāraṇa*)

*Śrinagara* श्रीनगर A principal city of Kashmir

*Śrinātha* श्रीनाथ A great Kāshmir Śaivite teacher of monistic theism See *Durvāsas*

*śrī pādukā* श्रीपादुका The *guru's* holy sandals See *pādukā*.

**Śrī Rudram** श्रीरुद्रम् “Hymn to the wielder of terrific powers” Preeminent Vedic hymn to Lord Śiva as the God of dissolution, chanted daily in Śiva temples throughout India It is in this long prayer, located in the *Yajur Veda*, *Taittirīya Samhitā*, in the middle of the first three *Vedas*, that the Śaivite *mantra* *Namah Śivāya* first appears

**śrīṣṭi** सृष्टि “Creation” See *Naṭarāja*

**śruti** श्रुति “That which is heard” Hinduism’s revealed scriptures, of supreme theological authority and spiritual value They are timeless teachings transmitted to *ṛishis*, or seers, directly by God thousands of years ago *Śruti* is thus said to be *apaurusheya*, “impersonal” *Śruti* consists of the *Vedas* and the *Āgamas*, preserved through oral tradition and eventually written down in Sanskrit Among the many sacred books of the Hindus, these two bodies of knowledge are held in the highest esteem For countless centuries *śruti* has been the basis of philosophical discussion, study and commentary, and this attention has given rise to countless schools of thought It is also the subject of deep study and meditation, to realize the wisdom of the ancients within oneself Most *mantras* are drawn from *śruti*, used for rites of worship, both public and domestic, as well as personal prayer and *japa*. It is a remarkable tribute to Hindu culture that so much of *śruti* was preserved for thousands of years without alteration by means of oral instruction from *guru* to *śishya*, generation after generation In the *Veda* tradition this was accomplished by requiring the student to learn each verse in eleven different ways, including backwards Traditionally *śruti* is not read, but chanted according to extremely precise rules of grammar, pitch, intonation and rhythm This brings forth its greatest power In the sacred language of *śruti*, word and meaning are so closely aligned that hearing these holy scriptures properly chanted is magical in its effect upon the soul of the listener See *Āgamas*, *smṛiti*, *Vedas*

**stave off** To push back, impede, keep from happening

**steadfast** Constant Firm, fixed, established, secure Not wavering or changeable

**sthapati** स्थपति From *stha*, “building or place,” and *pati*, “lord or father” A master architect of Āgamic temples A *sthapati* must be well versed in the *Śilpa Śāstras*, experienced in all aspects of temple construction, pious, mystically trained, and a good administrator, for he has a team of *śilpīs* working under him, stone cutters, carvers, sculptors, wood workers, etc See *Śilpa Śāstras*, *Stāpatyaveda*

**Stāpatyaveda** स्थापत्यवेद “Science of architecture” A class of writings on architecture, sometimes classed as one of the *Upavedas* It embodies such works as the *Mānasāra*, the *Vāstu Śāstras* and the architectural *Śilpa Śāstra*. See *Upaveda*

**sthiti** स्थिति “Preservation” See *Naṭarāja*

**sthūla śarīra** स्थूलशरीर “Gross or physical body” The odic body See *actinic*,

*actinodic, kośa, odic, subtle body*

**stingy (stinginess).** Miserly Unwilling or reluctant to give or spend  
**Stoics.** Ancient Greek philosophers who held that all things are governed by natural laws and that the wise follow virtue and remain aloof from the external world and its passions

**straits.** A narrow waterway; a difficult, dangerous experience or passage in life.

**stranglehold:** Any action that suppresses freedom or cuts off life

**stratification** "Making layers" The process of organizing or arranging in layers or levels

**strī dharma.** स्त्रीधर्म "Womanly conduct" See *dharma*

**Subāla Upanishad.** सुबाल उपनिषद् Belongs to the *Sūkla Yajur Veda*. A dialog between sage Subāla and Brahmā about the Supreme Being as Nārāyaṇa

**subatomic:** Of the inner parts of atoms, anything smaller than an atom

**subconscious mind.** *Samskāra chitta.* See. *aura, conscience, mind (five states)*

**śubha muhūrta** शुभमुहूर्त "Auspicious time" A range of time when specified activities are most likely to thrive and succeed See *muhūrta*.

**subjective:** Personal Of or colored by the personality, state of mind etc., of the observer (subject) Opposite of objective Cf *objective*.

**sublime:** Noble, grand Inspiring awe or reverence

**subliminal:** Below the threshold of consciousness or apprehension, such as an attitude of which one is not aware Subconscious See *mind (five states)*

**Subramanya.** सुब्रमण्य "Very pious, dear to holy men" A Name of Lord Kārttikeya. See *kārttikeya*.

**Subramuniyaswami** சுப்பிரமணியசுவாமி Current *satguru* (1927-) of the Nandinātha Sampradāya's Kailāsa Paramparā He was ordained Sivaya Subramuniyaswami by Sage Yogaswami on the full-moon day of May 12, 1949, in Jaffna, Sri Lanka, at 6 21 PM This was just days after he had attained *nirvikalpa samādhi* in the caves of Jalani Yogaswami, then 77, ordained the 22-year old *yogi* with a tremendous slap on the back, saying, "This will be heard in America," and conferring upon him the mission to bring the fullness of Śaivism to the West That same year, while still in Sri Lanka, Subramuniyaswami founded the Śaiva Siddhānta Yoga Order and Śaiva Siddhānta Church at the Śrī Subramuniya Āśrama in Alaveddy Returning to America, he spent the next six years preparing for his teaching mission through intense *sādhana* and *tapas* He began actively teaching in 1957 when he founded the Himalayan Academy In 1970, he established his international headquarters and monastery complex, Kauai Aadheenam, on Hawaii's Garden Island of Kauai Five years later, he designated a portion of the 51-acre holy site as the San Mārga Sanctuary, future site of Iravān Temple, carved of white granite stone in Bangalore, India To spearhead a growing Hindu renaissance, he founded the international newspaper *Hinduism Today* in 1979 Now franchised in several countries, the journal has become known worldwide as the Hindu family newspaper

In August of 1986, the World Religious Parliament in New Delhi honored Subramuniyaswami as one of five Hindu spiritual leaders outside of India who had most dynamically promoted Sanātana Dharma in the past 25 years. He was given the title Jagadāchārya, "World Teacher." In April of 1988, he was selected to represent Hinduism at the five-day Global Forum of Spiritual and Parliamentary Leaders for Human Survival, held in England at Oxford University, and again at the Global Forum on Human Survival in Moscow from January 11 to 15, 1990, in Brazil, June 5–7, 1992, and in Kyoto, Japan, April 15–18, 1993.

Over the years Subramuniyaswami has written hundreds of tracts and books, which have been distributed in the tens of thousands in many languages. Especially in the 1980s, he lectured worldwide and established the worship in numerous Hindu temples. Gurudeva teaches the traditional Śaivite Hindu path to enlightenment, a path that leads the soul from simple service to worshipful devotion to God, from the disciplines of meditation and *yoga* to the direct knowing of Divinity within. His insights into the nature of consciousness provide a key for quieting the external mind and revealing to aspirants their deeper states of being, which are eternally perfect, full of light, love, serenity and wisdom. He urges all seekers to live a life of *ahimsā*, harmlessness towards nature, people and creatures, an ethic which includes vegetarianism. From his *āśrama* in Hawaii, Gurudeva continues to follow his *satguru's* instruction to bring Śaivism to the Western world by teaching others to "know thy Self by thyself" and thus "see God Śiva everywhere." Through the ordained *swāmīs* of the Śaiva Siddhānta Yoga Order, he trains young men in the ancient path of *brahmacharya*, enlightenment and service to humanity. Over 30 full-time monks, along with family groups in eight countries, have joined to fulfill this *paramparā's* mission of furthering monistic Śaiva Siddhānta and Hindu solidarity.

The name *Subramuniya* is a Tamil spelling of the Sanskrit *Subhramunya* (not to be confused with *Subramanya*). It is formed from *subhra* meaning "light, intuition," and *muni*, "silent sage." *Ya* means "restraint, religious meditation." Thus, *Subramuniya* means a self-restrained soul who remains silent or, when he speaks, speaks out from intuition.

**subside** To become less active or less intense. To abate.

**substance** Essence, real nature.

**substratum** "Layer underneath." In geology, the layer of rock or other matter forming the foundation of a particular landscape and acting as its support. In philosophy, that which is "underneath," not visible but the support for all of existence, the substance or underlying force which is the foundation of any and all manifestation. Satchidānanda. See *Parāśakti*, *Satchidānanda*, *tattva*.

**sub-subconscious mind** *Vāsanā chitta*. See *mind* (five states).

**subsuperconscious mind** *Anukārana chitta*. See *kalā*, *mind* (five states).

*tattvas*

**subtle body** *Sūkshma śarīra*, the nonphysical, astral body or vehicle in which the soul encases itself to function in the Antarloka, or subtle world. The subtle body includes the *prāṇamaya*, *manomaya* and *vyjñānamaya* *kośas* if the soul is physically embodied. It consists of only *manomaya* and *vyjñānamaya* after death, when *prāṇamaya* *kośa* disintegrates. And it consists of only *vyjñānamaya* *kośa* when *manomaya* *kośa* is dropped off just before rebirth or when higher evolutionary planes are entered. Also part of the subtle body are the *antahkarana* (mental faculty: intellect, instinct and ego—*buddhi*, *manas* and *ahamkāra*), the five *jñānendriyas* (agents of perception: hearing, touch, sight, taste and smell), and the five *karmendriyas* (agents of action: speech, grasping, movement, excretion and generation).  
See. *indriya*, *jīva*, *kośa*

**subtle plane:** See *loka*, *three worlds*

**successor:** A person who follows another, in office or title, as the successor to a *satguru* or king —**succession:** A number of persons or things coming one after another in order; e.g., a spiritual succession. See *guru paramparā*

**sūchi.** सूची "Needle, sharp point" An index that which reveals a book  
**Suddha Śaiva Siddhānta.** शुद्धशैवसिद्धान्त "Pure Śaiva Siddhānta," a term first used by Tirumular in the *Tirumantiram* to describe his monistic Śaiva Siddhānta and distinguish it from pluralistic Siddhānta and other forms of Siddhānta that do not encompass the ultimate monism of Vedānta  
**Suddhavidyā** शुद्धविद्या "Pure Knowledge" The fifth *tattva* in the Śaiva Siddhānta system. See *tattva*

**śūdra.** शूद्र "Worker, servant." The social class of skilled artisans, workers and laborers. See *varna dharma*.

**suicide:** "Self-killing" In Sanskrit, *prāṇatyāga*, "abandoning life force" Intentionally ending one's own life through poisoning, drowning, burning, jumping, shooting, etc. Suicide has traditionally been condemned in Hindu scripture because, being an abrupt escape from life, it creates unseemly *karma* to face in the future. However, in cases of terminal disease or great disability, religious self-willed death through fasting—*prāyopaveśa*—is permitted. The person making such a decision declares it publicly, which allows for community regulation and distinguishes the act from suicide performed privately in traumatic emotional states of anguish and despair. Ancient lawgivers cite various stipulations: 1) inability to perform normal bodily purification, 2) death appears imminent or the condition is so bad that life's pleasures are nil, 3) the action must be done under community regulation. The gradual nature of *prāyopaveśa* is a key factor distinguishing it from sudden suicide, *svadehaghata* ("murdering one's body"), for it allows time for the individual to settle all differences with others, to ponder life and draw close to God, as well as for loved ones to oversee the person's gradual exit from the physical world. In the ideal, highly ritualized prac-



**Svarloka** स्वर्लोक "Celestial or bright plane" The third of the seven upper worlds, the mid-astral region (equated in some texts with Svarga), realm of *maṇipūra chakra*. See *loka*

**Svātmārāma**. स्वात्माराम See *Haṭha Yoga Pradīpikā*

**svayambhū Linga**. स्वयम्भूलिङ्ग "Self-existent mark or sign of God" Names a Śivalinga discovered in nature and not carved or crafted by human hands, often a smooth cylindrical stone, called *bānalīnga*, such as found in India's Narmada River See *Śivalinga*

**Svāyambhuva Āgama** स्वायम्भुव आगम One of the 28 *Śaiva Siddhānta Āgamas* See *Śaiva Āgama*.

**Svāyambhuva Sūtra(s)** स्वायम्भुवसूत्र A subsidiary text of the *Śaiva Āgamas*  
**Śvetāśvatara Upanishad** श्वेताश्वतर उपनिषद् An *Upanishad* of the *Yajur Veda* that speaks of personal God and devotion, and at the same time of the unity of God, soul and world It is a major *Upanishads*, among the greatest monistic writings, especially valued by Śaivite schools

**swāmī**. स्वामी "Lord, owner" He who knows or is master of himself A respectful title for a Hindu monk, usually a *sannyāsin* The term *swāmī* is sometimes applied more broadly to include nonmonastics dedicated to spiritual work See *monk*, *sannyāsin*

**swāminī**. स्वामिनी The feminine form of *swāmī* See *nunk*, *sannyāsa*, *swāmī*

**Swāmī Nityānanda** स्वामीनित्यानन्द Kashmir Śaivite *satguru* (?–1961), whose successor, Swāmī Mukṭānanda (1908–1982), founded the *Siddha Yoga Dhām*

**Swāmī Śivānanda**. स्वामीशिवानन्द One of Hinduism's most influential modern-day saints (1887–1963) He was born in South India, practiced medicine in Malaysia, published a medical journal, became administrator of a hospital and later renounced the world He was initiated by Swāmī Viśvānanda Sarasvatī at Rishikesh in 1924, and founded the Divine Life Society in 1939, which has branches in many countries today He has been a powerful force in spreading Hindu teachings in India and abroad through his many books and the travels of his numerous *swāmīs* Emphasized *haṭha* and *rāja yoga* and a broad, universal form of Hinduism

**swastika**. स्वस्तिक "It is well" The ancient Hindu symbol of auspiciousness and good fortune, representing the sun The right-angled arms of the swastika denote the indirect way in which Divinity is reached—through intuition and not by intellect It has been a prominent icon in many cultures See *mūrti*

**swirl** To move in a whirling, circular motion, like a whirlpool

**symbolism** The representation of one thing by something else E.g., the *damaru*, Śiva's drum, is a symbol of creation

**syncretism** A combination of various beliefs and practices, often of opposing views formed into a one creed or system of belief, typically marked by inconsistencies See *universalist*

**synonymous** Having the same or similar meaning Quality of two words or phrases whose meanings are identical

**synthesis** A combining of various parts to make a whole



**Tagore, Rabīndranāth** One of India's most highly acclaimed modern-day writers and poets (1861-1941), son of Devendranāth Tagore. He wrote in Bengali and in English. His most famous poetic religious work is *Gītāñjali*, which centers around dialogs between the soul and God Vishnu. He received the Nobel Prize for literature in 1913.

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**Taittirīya Āraṇyaka**. तैत्तिरीय आरण्यक A forest treatise of *Kṛishṇa Yajur Veda*. See. *Veda*.

**Taittirīya Saṁhitā** तैत्तिरीयसंहिता See *Yajur Veda*

**Taittirīya Upanishad** तैत्तिरीय उपनिषद् Belongs to the *Taittirīya Brāhmana* of the *Yajur Veda* and is divided into three sections called *vallī(s)*. The first deals with phonetics and pronunciation, the second and third with Brahman and the attainment of bliss.

**tala**. तल "Plane or world, level, base, bottom." Root of the name of the seven realms of lower consciousness centered in the seven *chakras* below the *mūlādhāra*. See *chakra*, *hell*, *purgatory*, *loka*, *Naraka*.

**talātala chakra** तलातल "Lower region." The fourth *chakra* below the *mūlādhāra*, centered in the calves. Region of chronic mental confusion and unreasonable stubbornness. Corresponds to the fourth astral netherworld beneath the earth's surface, called *Tāmisra* ("darkness") or *Talātala*. This state of consciousness is born of the sole motivation of self-preservation. See *chakra*, *loka*, *Naraka*.

**tamas(īc)** तमस् "Force of inertia." See *guna*.

tice, one begins by obtaining forgiveness and giving forgiveness. Next a formal vow, *mahāvratā-marāṇa*, "great vow of death," is given to one's guru, following a full discussion of all *karmas* of this life, especially fully and openly confessing one's wrongdoings. Thereafter, attention is to be focused on scripture and the guru's noble teachings. Meditation on the innermost, immortal Self becomes the full focus as one gradually abstains from food. At the very end, as the soul releases itself from the body, the sacred *mantra* is repeated as instructed by the preceptor. See *death, penance, reincarnation, soul, prāyopaveśa*.

**Śukla Yajur Veda.** शुक्लयजुर्वेद See *Yajur Veda*.

**sūkshma śarīra.** सूक्ष्मशरीर "Subtle body," or astral body. See *actinic, actinodic, kośa, odic, soul, subtle body*.

**Śulba Śāstra(s)** शुल्बशास्त्र Practical manuals giving the measurements and procedures for constructing the sites of Vedic *yajña* rites. A division of the *Kalpa Vedāṅga* (*Veda* limb on rituals), these *sūtras* employ sophisticated geometry and are India's earliest extant mathematical texts. *Śulba* means "string or cord," denoting the use of string for measuring. See *Vedāṅga*.

**sully (sullied)** To make dirty, or impure. See *purity-impurity*.

**Sundaranāthar** சுந்தரநாதர் Original name of Nātha Siddha Tirumular before he trekked to South India from the Himalayas. See *Tirumular*.

**Sundarar** சுந்தரர் One of the four Tamil Samayāchāryas (ca 800), and composer of devotional hymns to God Śiva, which form the seventh book of the *Tirumurai*. In these, he pleads forth-rightly to Śiva for material as well as spiritual abundance. See *Nalvar, Nayanar, Tirumurai*.

**Śūnya Sampādane:** शून्यसंपादने "Gaining of Nothingness." A primary text of Vira Śaivism (ca 1550) consisting of debates and writings of the Śiva Śaranās. *Śūnya*, "the void, the distinctionless absolute," *sampādana* "attainment, realization, enlightenment."

**superconscious mind.** *Kārana chitta*. See *kalā, mind (five states), mind (three phases), Satchidānanda, tattva*.

**supernatural** Beyond or transcending the natural laws of the physical cosmos. Of or relating to an order of existence beyond the visible universe, referring to events, agencies or knowledge superseding or mystically explaining the laws of nature. See *mysticism, shamanism*.

**supplicate (supplication)** To ask for humbly. To earnestly pray for.

**Suprabheda Āgama** सुप्रभेद आगम One of the 28 Śaiva Siddhānta Āgamas, this scripture discusses temple worship, especially personal devotions, festivals, practices and initiations for each stage of life. A total of 4,666 verses have been preserved from the original scripture.

**supreme:** Highest in rank, power, authority.

**Supreme God** Highest God, the source or creator of all other Gods, beings and all manifestation.

**Sūrdās** सूरदास Blind North-Indian Vaishnava poet (ca 1550), famous for his

- devotional hymns to Lord Kṛishna His massive writing *Sūrsagar*, "Sur's Ocean," is widely read
- surpass To excel, to be superior to
- surrender Giving up or yielding Surrender to the Divine is called *prapatti*, a complete giving over of oneself to God's will in total trust and abandonment See *bhakti*, *prapatti*, *sacrifice*.
- Sūrya*·सूर्य "Sun" One of the principal Divinities of the *Vedas*, also prominent in the epics and *Purānas* Śaivites revere Sūrya, the Sun God each morning as Śiva Sūrya Smārtas and Vaishnavas revere the golden orb as Sūrya Nārāyana As the source of light, the sun is the most readily apparent image of Divinity available to man As the giver of life, Sūrya is worshiped during harvest festivals everywhere Esoterically, the sun represents the point where the manifest and unmanifest worlds meet or unite In *yoga*, the sun represents the masculine force, *pingalā* Sūrya also signifies the Self within In the Vedic description of the course of souls after death, the "path of the sun" leads liberated souls to the realm of Brahman, while the path of the moon leads back to physical birth
- sushumnā nādi*·सुषुम्णानाडी "Most gracious channel" Central psychic nerve current within the spinal column See *kundalinī*, *nādi*, *samādhi*
- sustainable: Maintainable, able to be kept up or continued consistently over a period of time
- sustenance (to sustain) Support That which preserves life, or gives strength Nourishment
- sutala*·सुतल "Great depth" Region of obsessive jealousy and retaliation The third *chakra* below the *mūlādhāra*, centered in the knees Corresponds to the third astral netherworld beneath the earth's surface, called *Samhāta* ("abandoned") or *Sutala* See *chakra*, *loka*, *Naraka*.
- Sūta Samhitā*·सूतसंहिता A chapter of the *Skānda Purāna* dealing in part with philosophy
- sūtra*·सूत्र "Thread" An aphoristic verse, the literary style consisting of such maxims From 500 BCE, this style was widely adopted by Indian philosophical systems and eventually employed in works on law, grammar, medicine, poetry, crafts, etc. Each *sūtra* is often accompanied by a commentary called *bhāshya* and sometimes subcommentary called *tika*, *vyakhyana* or *tippani*. Through the media of short, concise, easily memorized *sūtras*, vast amounts of knowledge were preserved Reciting relevant *sūtra* texts from memory is a daily *sādhana* in various Hindu arts and sciences *Sūtra* also names the wife's wedding pendant (*mangala sūtra*) See *bhāshya*, *wedding pendant*
- svadharma*·स्वधर्म "One's own way" See *dharma*.
- svādhishṭhāna*·स्वाधिष्ठान "One's own base" See *chakra*.
- svādhyāya*·स्वाध्याय "Self-reflection, scriptural study" See *yama-miyama*.
- svarga*·स्वर्ग "Abode of light." An intermediate realm of the *Antarloka*, a term essentially synonymous with *Svarloka*. See *loka*.

**Svarloka** स्वर्लोक "Celestial or bright plane" The third of the seven upper worlds, the mid-astral region (equated in some texts with Svarga), realm of *maṇipūra chakra*. See *loka*.

**Svātmārāma**. स्वात्माराम See *Haṭha Yoga Pradīpikā*.

**svayambhū Linga** स्वयम्भूलिङ्ग "Self-existent mark or sign of God" Names a Śivalinga discovered in nature and not carved or crafted by human hands, often a smooth cylindrical stone, called *bānalīṅga*, such as found in India's Narmada River See *Śivalinga*

**Svāyambhuva Āgama**. स्वायम्भुव आगम One of the 28 *Śaiva Siddhānta Āgamas* See *Śaiva Āgama*.

**Svāyambhuva Sūtra(s)** स्वायम्भुवसूत्र A subsidiary text of the *Śaiva Āgamas*  
**Śvetāśvatara Upanishad**. श्वेताश्वतर उपनिषद् An *Upanishad* of the *Yajur Veda* that speaks of personal God and devotion, and at the same time of the unity of God, soul and world It is a major *Upanishads*, among the greatest monistic writings, especially valued by Śaivite schools

**swāmī** स्वामी "Lord, owner" He who knows or is master of himself A respectful title for a Hindu monk, usually a *sannyāsin* The term *swāmī* is sometimes applied more broadly to include nonmonastics dedicated to spiritual work See *monk*, *sannyāsin*

**swāminī**. स्वामिनी The feminine form of *swāmī* See *nunk*, *sannyāsa*, *swāmī*.  
**Swāmī Nityānanda**. स्वामीनित्यानन्द Kashmīr Śaivite *satguru* (?–1961), whose successor, Swāmī Mukṭānanda (1908–1982), founded the Siddha Yoga Dhām

**Swāmī Śivānanda**. स्वामीशिवानन्द One of Hinduism's most influential modern-day saints (1887–1963) He was born in South India, practiced medicine in Malaysia, published a medical journal, became administrator of a hospital and later renounced the world He was initiated by Swāmī Viśvānanda Sarasvatī at Rishikesh in 1924, and founded the Divine Life Society in 1939, which has branches in many countries today He has been a powerful force in spreading Hindu teachings in India and abroad through his many books and the travels of his numerous *swāmīs* Emphasized *haṭha* and *rāja yoga* and a broad, universal form of Hinduism

**swastika** स्वस्तिक "It is well" The ancient Hindu symbol of auspiciousness and good fortune, representing the sun The right-angled arms of the swastika denote the indirect way in which Divinity is reached—through intuition and not by intellect It has been a prominent icon in many cultures See *mūrti*

**swirl** To move in a whirling, circular motion, like a whirlpool

**symbolism** The representation of one thing by something else E.g., the *damaru*, Śiva's drum, is a symbol of creation

**syncretism** A combination of various beliefs and practices, often of opposing views formed into a one creed or system of belief, typically marked by inconsistencies See *universalist*

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**Tamīl** தமிழ் The ancient Dravidian language of the Tamils, a Caucasoid people of South India and Northern Sri Lanka, who have now migrated throughout the world. The official language of the state of Tamil Nadu, India. See *race*.

**Tamīl Nadu** தமிழ் நாடு State in South India, 50,000 square miles, population 55 million. Land of countless holy scriptures, saints, sages and over 40,000 magnificent temples, including Chidambaram, Madurai, Palani Hills and Rāmeśvaram.

**tāṇḍava** ताण्डव "Violent dance." Any vigorous dance sequence performed by a male dancer. There are many forms of *tāṇḍava*. Its prototype is Śiva's dance of bliss, *ānanda tāṇḍava*. The more sublime, female dance is called *lāsya*, from *lasya*, "lively." Dance in general is *nartana*. See *Naṭarāja*.

**tantra** तन्त्र "Loom, methodology." 1) Most generally, a synonym for *śāstra*, "scripture." 2) A synonym for the Āgamic texts, especially those of the Śākta faith, a class of Hindu scripture providing detailed instruction on all aspects of religion, mystic knowledge and science. The *tantras* are also associated with the Śaiva tradition. 3) A specific method, technique or spiritual practice within the Śaiva and Śākta traditions. For example, *prāṇāyāma* is a *tantra*. *Tantra* generally involves a reversal of the normal flow of energies. Its perspective is that the inner self is most important, and outer life is secondary. *Tantra* causes the life force to flow up through the *sushumnā*. Many are the methods for overcoming the unovercomeable. Fallen into the hands of the unscrupulous, these techniques become black magic (*abhichāra*).

**Tantrāloka** तन्त्रालोक One of the most comprehensive and authoritative expositions of Kashmir Śaivism, written by Abhinavagupta. See *Abhinavagupta*, *Kashmir Śaivism*.

**tantrika** तन्त्रिक (Anglicized *tantric*) Adjectival form for practices prescribed in the Tantra traditions. The name of a follower of any of the *tantric* traditions. See *tantra*, *tantrism*.

**tantrism** The enlightenment path outlined in the *Tantra* scriptures. 1) Tantrism is sometimes considered a parallel stream of history and tradition in Hinduism, running alongside and gradually interweaving with the Vedic *brāhminical* tradition. 2) Tantrism refers to traditions, mainly within Śaivism and Śāktism, that focus on the arousal of the *kundalinī* force, and which view the human body as a vehicle of the Divine and an instrument for liberation. Tantrism's ultimate aim is a channeling of the *kundalinī* life force through the *sushumnā*, the gracious channel, upwards into the *sahasrāra chakra* and beyond, through the door of *brahman* (*brahmarandhra*) into Paraśiva, either before or at the time of death. The stress is on the transformation of all spheres of consciousness, spiritual, psychic, emotional and material. It is a path of *sādhana*. 3) —*Śākta Tantrism* Brings a strong emphasis on the worship of the feminine force. Depending on the school, this may be symbolic or literal in rites involving sexual intercourse, etc. Śākta

Tantrism's main principle is the use of the material to gain the spiritual. In certain schools, historically, this implies embracing that which is normally forbidden and manipulating the forces to attain transcendent consciousness rather than lower consciousness. There are three main streams: 1) the right-hand path (*dakṣiṇa mārga* or *dakṣiṇāchāra*) of conservative Hindu practice, 2) the left-hand path (*vāmā mārga* or *vāmāchāra*) involving the use of things normally forbidden such as taking intoxicants, meat, ritual sex, etc., and 3) the *yogic* path of the Kaula sect. Gorakshanātha followers are sometimes grouped with the latter. See *Śāktism*, *kundalinī*, *rāja yoga*, *tantra*.

**Tao** "The way" The central concept of the Chinese religion called Taoism. Though traditionally considered impossible to translate, *Tao* is often rendered as "cosmic order," akin to the Sanskrit *ṛta*. See *dharma*.

**tapas**. तपस् "Heat, fire" 1) Purificatory spiritual disciplines, severe austerity, penance and sacrifice. The endurance of pain, suffering, through the performance of extreme penance, religious austerity and mortification. By comparison, *sādhana* is austerity of a simple, sustained kind, while *tapas* is austerity of a severe, psyche-transforming nature. *Tapas* is extreme bodily mortification, long term *sādhana*s, such as meditating under a tree in one place for 12 years, taking a lifetime vow of silence and never speaking or writing, or standing on one leg for a prescribed number of years. Scriptures generally warn against extreme asceticism which would bring harm to the body. 2) On a deeper level, *tapas* is the intense inner state of *kundalinī* "fire" which stimulates mental anguish and separates the individual from society. Life does not go on as usual when this condition occurs. The association with a *satguru*, Sadāśiva, brings the devotee into *tapas*, and it brings him out of it. The fire of *tapas* burns on the dross of *sañchita karmas*. This is the source of heat, dismay, depression and striving until the advent of final and total surrender, *prapatti*. The individual can mollify this heated condition by continuing his regular *sādhana* as outlined by the *guru*. The fires of self-transformation may be stimulated by the practice of *tapas*, or come unbidden. One can "do" *tapas*, but the true *tapas* is a condition of being and consciousness which is a state of grace, bringing positive change, transformation and purification of one's nature. *Guru bhakti* is the only force that can cool the fires of *tapas*. See *kundalinī*, *penance*, *sādhana*.

**tapasvin**. तपस्विन् One who performs *tapas* or is in the state of *tapas*. See: *tapas*.

**Tapoloka**. तपोलोक "Plane of austerity" The second highest of the seven upper worlds, realm of *ājñā chakra*. See. *loka*.

tarnished. Dulled, sullied, spoiled, lacking luster

**Tat**: तत् "That, the indescribable Absolute, supreme."

**Tātparyadīpikā**. तात्पर्यदीपिका A commentary by Śrīkumāra (ca 1100) on the *Tattvapraśāsa* of Śrī Bhojadeva Paramāra (1018–1060), a philosopher-king in Central India who expounded Śaiva Siddhānta. Śrīkumāra upheld the monistic basis of Bhojadeva's work, while later commentator Aghoraśiva



reinterpreted it in dualistic terms See *Aghoraśiva, Śaiva Siddhānta*.

**Tat Sat.** तत् सत् "That is Truth" A terse phrase pointing to the inexpressible truth of which nothing more can be said

**tattva.** तत्त्व "That-ness" or "essential nature" *Tattvas* are the primary principles, elements, states or categories of existence, the building blocks of the universe. Lord Śiva constantly creates, sustains the form of and absorbs back into Himself His creations Rishis describe this emanational process as the unfoldment of *tattvas*, stages or evolutes of manifestation, descending from subtle to gross At *mahāpralaya*, cosmic dissolution, they enfold into their respective sources, with only the first two *tattvas* surviving the great dissolution The first and subtlest form—the pure consciousness and source of all other evolutes of manifestation—is called Śiva *tattva*, or *Parāśakti-nāda*. But beyond Śiva *tattva* lies *Paraśiva*—the utterly transcendent, Absolute Reality, called *attava*. That is Śiva's first perfection The Sāṅkhya system discusses 25 *tattvas* Śaivism recognizes these same 25 plus 11 beyond them, making 36 *tattvas* in all These are divided into three groups 1) First are the five *śuddha* (pure) *tattvas* These constitute the realm of *śuddha māyā* 2) Next are the seven *śuddha-aśuddha* (pure-impure) *tattvas* These constitute the realm of *śuddhāśuddha māyā*. 3) The third group comprises the 24 *aśuddha* (impure) *tattvas* These constitute the realm of *aśuddha māyā*.

—**THE ŚUDDHA TATTVAS** Actinic or spiritual energy This is the superconscious realm, also known as *śuddha* (pure) *māyā* or *mahāmāyā Bindu*, transcendent light, is the "material" cause of this pure sphere This is the Śivaloka, the region of the 330 million Gods, the myriad *rishis* and other beings who have attained freedom from the triple bondage

1) **Śiva tattva.** "auspiciousness," of two parts the higher is *Parāśakti*, "Supreme Energy," from which emerges primal sound, *nāda* (more precisely *Paranāda*, soundless sound) Though most often referred to as sound, *nāda* is more mystically known as movement, the first impulse arising from perfect quiescence, the first "thing" out of the motionless Self This is Śiva's second perfection, *Parāśakti*, superconsciousness, the mind of God The Śiva *tattva* pervades all other 35 categories and possesses the powers of will, knowledge and action (*icṣhā, jñāna, kṛiyā*)

2) **Śakti tattva** energy, corresponds to *bindu*, light, the cause of form (more precisely *Parabindu*, primal nucleus) This is the *tattva* of *Paramēśvara*, the Primal Soul, father-mother God, Śiva's third perfection, who after *mahāpralaya* remains transfixed in deep *samādhi*, until He again emanates the universe through His Cosmic Dance

3) **Sadāśiva tattva** the power of revealing grace In this realm the energies of knowledge and action are in perfect equilibrium This is the realm of the *ānandamaya kośa*

4) **Īśvara tattva.** the energy of concealment, concealing grace The energy of action prevails over that of knowledge in order to arouse cosmic activity

in its subtle form

5) *suddhavidyā tattva* pure knowledge, *dharma* This is a level of manifestation in which the energy of action is in abeyance and the energy of knowledge prevails *Suddhavidyā tattva* includes Śiva's other three powers or aspects Rudra (destruction), Vishnu (preservation) and Brahmā (creation)

—*THE ŚUDDHĀŚUDDHA TATTVAS* Actinodic, or spiritual-magnetic, energy The seven *tattvas* from *māyā* to *purusha* make up the *śuddhāśuddha* (pure-impure) realm

6) *māyā tattva* mirific energy, the "material" cause of the "impure sphere" The category of *māyā* brings into being as its immediate aids the following five *tattvas*, known as the "five sheaths," *pañcha kañchuka*, of the individual soul, *purusha* Collectively they make up the *viññānamaya kośa*, or mental body

7) *kāla tattva* the phenomenon of time, which divides all experience into past, present and future

8) *niyati tattva* *karmic* destiny, necessity, order, law of cause and effect, restraint

9) *kalā tattva* creativity, aptitude, the power which draws the soul toward spiritual knowledge Its energy partially removes the veil of *ānava* which clouds the inherent powers of the soul

10) *vidyā tattva* limited knowledge, the power which gives the soul practical knowledge in accord with its present life experiences

11) *rāga tattva* attachment, the arousal of desire, without which no experience of the objective world is possible

12) *purusha tattva* soul identity, soul connected with subjectivity Through identification with the five above "sheaths," the soul, *ātman*, becomes a *purusha*, or bound soul, capable of experiencing the higher *Antar-loka* as a limited individual This five-fold sheath is called the *pañcha kañchuka*, or *viññānamaya kośa* (mental body)

—*ĀŚUDDHA TATTVAS* Odic, or magnetic, energy These 24 categories make up the "world" of *āsuddha* (impure) *māyā* This is the realm of the astral and physical planes, in which souls function through the *manomaya*, *prānamaya* and *annamaya kośas*, depending on their level of embodiment.

13) *prakṛiti tattva* primal nature, the gross energy of which all lower *tattvas* are formed *Prakṛiti*, also called *pradhāna*, is expressed as three *gunas* (qualities)—*sattva*, *rajas* and *taṃas* These manifest as light, activity and inertia, respectively, and on the subtle level as pleasure, sorrow and delusion These *gunas* dominate the soul's powers of knowledge, action and desire (*jñāna*, *kriyā* and *icchā*), and form the *guna* body, *manomaya kośa*.

—*antahkarana* the mental faculty 14) *buddhi tattva* judgment, intellect, the faculty of discrimination 15) *ahamkāra tattva* egoism, sense of I-ness in the external form It is the fundamental principle of individuality 16) *manas tattva* the instinctive mind, the receiving and directing link

between the outer senses and the inner faculties

—*jñānendriya* the five cognitive senses, of the nature of *sattva guna*. Each has a subtle and physical aspect 17) *śrotra tattva* hearing (ears) 18) *tvak tattva* touching (skin) 19) *chakshu tattva* seeing (eyes) 20) *rasanā tattva* tasting (tongue) 21) *ghrāṇa tattva* smelling (nose)

—*karmendriya* the five organs of action, of the nature of *raja guna* Each has a subtle and physical aspect 22) *vāk tattva* speech (voice) 23) *pāni tattva* grasping (hands) 24) *pāda tattva* walking (feet) 25) *pāyu tattva* excretion (anus) 26) *upastha tattva* procreation (genitals)

—*tanmatra* the five subtle elements, of the nature of *tama guna*. 27) *śabda tattva* sound 28) *sparsa tattva* feel 29) *rūpa tattva* form 30) *rasa tattva* taste 31) *gandha tattva* odor These are the subtle characteristics of the five gross elements, *ākāśa*, *vāyu*, *tejas*, *āpas* and *prithivī*, respectively

—*pañcabhūta* the five gross elements 32) *ākāśa tattva* ether or space 33) *vāyu tattva* air 34) *tejas tattva* fire 35) *āpas tattva* (or *jāla*) water 36) *prithivī tattva* earth See *atattva*, *antahkarana*, *guna*, *kośa*, *Śiva* (also, charts at end of lexicon)

**Tattva Prakāśa.** तत्त्वप्रकाश "Illumination of the categories" Text of 76 verses by the philosopher-king Bhoja Paramāra which systematized and consolidated monistic Śaiva Siddhānta in the 11th century

**tattvatrayī** तत्त्वत्रयी "Essential triad" Names the primary categories of Śaiva and Śākta schools, *Paṭi* (God), *pasu* (soul) and *pāśa* (world, or bonds) See *padārtha*, *Paṭi-pāśu-pāśa*

**Tayumanavar** தாயுமானவர் A Tamil Śaivayogī, devotional mystic and poet saint (ca 17th century) whose writings are a harmonious blend of philosophy and devotion In his poem "Chinmayānanda Guru," Tayumanavar places himself in the genealogy of Rishi Tirumular See *Tirumular*

**temper** To reduce in intensity or moderate by the addition of other qualities Also, the quality of anger, or the propensity to become angry See *chakra*.

**temple** A place consecrated for, and dedicated to, the worship of God or Gods Hindus revere their temples as sacred, magical places in which the three worlds most consciously commune—structures especially built and consecrated to channel the subtle spiritual energies of inner-world beings The temple's psychic atmosphere is maintained through regular worship ceremonies (*pūjā*) invoking the Deity, who uses His installed image (*mūrti*) as a temporary body to bless those living on the earth plane In Hinduism, the temple is the hub of virtually all aspects of social and religious life It may be referred to by the Sanskrit terms *mandira*, *devālaya* (or *Śivālaya*, a Śiva temple), as well as by vernacular terms such as *koyil* (Tamil) See *garbhagriha*, *darsana*, *mandapa*, *pradakshina*, *sound*, *teradi*, *tirthayātrā*.

**temporal** Referring to time, subject to time Passing, existing only for a time

**tend** Having a tendency or inclination to do something

**teradi** தேரடி "Chariot shed" Tamil term for the building that houses the

- temple cart or chariot (*ter*) in which the parade Deity, *utsava mūrti*, is taken in procession on festival days
- terminable: Which can be ended Not lasting forever
- terminal: Concluding, ending, final
- terminal illness Incurable disease, ending in death See *death, suicide*
- That. When capitalized, this simple demonstrative refers uniquely to the Ultimate, Indescribable or Nameless Absolute The Self God, Paraśiva It is the English equivalent of *Tat*, as in, *Tat tvam asi*, "You are That!"
- theism Belief that God exists as a real, conscious, personal Supreme Being, creator and ruler of the universe May also include belief in the Gods
- theology: The study of religious doctrines, specifically of the nature of God, soul and world —theologians Those who study, are expert in or formulate theology Cf *metaphysics*
- thither: Toward that place, there Farther
- thou/thy Poetic, Old English alternates for *you/your* *Thy* is the possessive form of *thou* Often used in religious writing or translation of devotional scripture as an expression of respect and veneration not conveyed in the ordinary pronouns *you* and *your*
- three worlds: The three worlds of existence, *triloka*, are the primary hierarchical divisions of the cosmos 1) Bhūloka "Earth world," the physical plane 2) Antarloka "Inner or in-between world," the subtle or astral plane 3) Śivaloka "World of Śiva," and of the Gods and highly evolved souls, the causal plane, also called Kāranaloka
- The three-world cosmology is readily found in Hindu scriptures In the major *Upanishads* of the *Vedas* we find numerous citations, with interesting variations Verse 1 5 17 of the *Bṛihadāranyaka Upanishad* states, "Now, there are, verily, three worlds, the world of men (*Manushyaloka*), the world of the fathers (*Pitṛiloka*) and the world of the Gods (*Devaloka*) " Later, verse 6 2 15 refers to the two higher worlds as the *Devaloka* and the *Brahmaloka* The *Katha Upanishad*, verse 2 3 8, omitting the world of men, lists the *Pitṛiloka*, the *Gandharvaloka* (world of genies or elementals) and the *Brahmaloka* (world of God) Another perspective of three worlds is offered in the *Praśna Upanishad* 3 8, which lists the world of good (*Punyaloka*), the world of evil (*Pāpaloka*) and the world of men (*Manushyaloka*)
- Scriptures offer several other cosmological perspectives, most importantly seven upper worlds (*sapta urdhvaloka*) and seven lower worlds (*sapta adholoka*), which correspond to the 14 *chakras* and make up the "world-egg of God," the universe, called *Brahmānda* The seven upper worlds are Bhūloka, Bhuvarloka, Svarloka, Maharloka, Janaloka, Tapoloka and Satyaloka The second, third and fourth comprise the subtle plane The highest three comprise the causal plane The seven lower worlds, collectively known as *Naraka* or *Pātāla*, are (from highest to lowest) *Put*, *Avīchi*, *Samhāta*, *Tāmisra*, *Rūjisha*, *Kuḍmala* and *Kākola*

Saint Sundaramūrti (ca 800) Book 8 contains the two works of Saint Manikkavasagar (9th century)—*Tiruvāṣaṁ* and *Tirukovaiyar* Book 9 is the *Tiruvaiṣippa* and *Tiruppallandu*, which together comprise the works of nine saints Book 10 is the *Tirumantiram* of Saint Tirumular (ca 200 BCE) Book 11 contains the hymns of ten saints, including Saint Nakkīrar and Nambiyandar Nambī, the compiler Book 12 is the *Periyapurāṇam* by Saint Sekkīlar (11th century), narrating the life story of the 63 Śaiva Nayanar saints The first seven books are known as *Devarams*

**Tiruvalluvar.** திருவள்ளுவர் “Holy weaver” Tamil weaver and household-saint (ca 200 BCE) who wrote the classic Śaivite ethical scripture *Tirukural* He lived with his wife Vasukī, famed for her remarkable loyalty and virtues, near modern-day Madras There a memorial park, the Valluvar Kottam, enshrines his extraordinary verses in marble See *Tirukural*.

**Tiruvāṣaṁ.** திருவாசகம் “Holy Utterances” The lyrical Tamil scripture by Saint Manikkavasagar (ca 850) Considered one of the most profound and beautiful devotional works in the Tamil language, it discusses every phase of the spiritual path from doubt and anguish to perfect faith in God Śiva, from earthly experience to the *guru-disciple* relationship and freedom from rebirth The work is partly autobiographical, describing how Manikkavasagar, the prime minister to the Pandyan King, renounced the world after experiencing an extraordinary vision of Śiva seated beneath a tree The 658 hymns of *Tiruvāṣaṁ* together with the 400 hymns of *Tirukovaiyar* by the same author make up the eighth *Tirumurai* of Śaiva Siddhānta scripture See *Manikkavasagar, Tirumurai*

**tithe (tithing).** The spiritual discipline, often a *vrata*, of giving one tenth of one’s gainful and gifted income to a religious organization of one’s choice, thus sustaining spiritual education and upliftment on earth The Sanskrit equivalent is *daśamāṁśa*, called *makīmai* in the Tamil tradition Tithing is given not as an offering, but as “God’s money” In olden days it was a portion of one’s crops, such as one coconut out of ten Immediately setting aside the tithe as soon as income is received sanctifies the remaining portion and reaps the greatest *punya*. It is an acknowledgement by faithful Hindus of God’s providential care, bringing a greater awareness of God’s power in the world Because tithers are thus uplifted to a purer, spiritual consciousness, abundance naturally floods into their lives Additional offerings should be given after this minimal obligation is paid. See. *daśamāṁśa*.

**tithi.** திதி A lunar day, approximately one-thirtieth of the time it takes the moon to orbit the earth Because of their means of calculation (based on the difference of the longitudinal angle between the position of sun and the moon), *tithis* may vary in length There are 15 *tithis* in each fortnight (half month) The names of the *tithis* are Prathamā (new moon), Dvitiyā, Tritiyā, Chaturthī, Pañchamī, Shashthī, Saptamī, Aṣṭamī, Navamī, Daśamī, Ekādaśī, Dvādaśī, Trayodaśī, Chaturdaśī, and lastly either Pūrṇimā (full

- moon) or Amāvasyā (new moon) These are sometimes prefixed to indicate either the dark (*kṛishna*) fortnight—when the moon is waning—or the light (*śukla*) fortnight—when the moon is waxing—e g , Śukla-Navami Most Hindu festivals are calculated according to the *tithis*
- touchstone. A test or criterion for determining value or authenticity
- trait. A quality or distinguishing peculiarity of character
- trance. In general, a condition of altered consciousness, accompanied by a lack of awareness to physical surroundings, neither a state of wakefulness nor sleep In a religious sense it is a state of intense concentration, introspection or meditation In such a state, called *samādhi*, body consciousness is completely lost as the energies are drawn up the spine into the *sahasrāra chakra* at the crown of the head Great prophets have gone into trance and spoken out predictions of the future and in their waking state later had no memory of what they had said In spiritualism, trance describes the phenomenon in which an individual leaves the physical body, and a disincarnate being enters or takes control of the body, often giving forth verbal messages to others in attendance, as in a seance Trance can be either voluntary or involuntary See *mediumship*, *samādhi*
- tranquil Quiet, peaceful
- transcend To go beyond one's limitations, e g , "to transcend one's ego" Philosophically, to go beyond the limits of this world, or more profoundly, beyond time, form and space into the Absolute, the Self God
- transcendent. Surpassing the limits of experience or manifest form In Śaiva Siddhānta, a quality of God Śiva as Absolute Reality, Paraśiva, the Self Distinguished from immanent See *atattva*, *Paraśiva*
- transfix. To render motionless
- transgress To overstep or break a law or ethical principle
- transient. That which is temporary, fleeting Passing, not permanent
- transition Passing from one condition or place to another A synonym of *death* which implies, more correctly, continuity of the individual rather than his annihilation See *death*
- traverse To move across or extend over
- treacherous Dangerous, unreliable Giving a false sense of safety
- tread To walk on or across
- treatise: An article or book which systematically discusses a subject
- trepidation Anxiety, fearful uncertainty Trembling
- tribal. Relating to, or having the character of a tribe, a group, clan or village often related by ancestry, race or allegiance to a common leader or lineage A term often used derogatorily to refer to so-called primitive peoples, but more accurately seen as the natural human social structure into which all villages and communities, ancient or modern, naturally organize A term often used in reference to indigenous peoples, mostly shamanic in conviction, found worldwide from ancient times See *pagan*

From the Śaiva Āgamic perspective of the 36 *tattvas*, the pure sphere, *śuddha māyā*—the first five *tattvas*—is subdivided into 33 planes of existence. The “pure-impure” realm, *śuddhāśuddha māyā*—the seven *tattvas* from *māyā tattva* to *puruṣa*—contains 27 planes of existence. The *āśuddha* (“impure”) realm—of 24 *tattvas*—has 56 planes of existence. See *chakra*, *loka*, *Naraka*, *tattva* (also *individual loka* entries)

**thwart.** To hinder, obstruct or frustrate

**thy:** See *thou/thy*

**tilaka.** तिलक Marks made on the forehead or the brow with clay, ashes or sandalwood paste as an indication of sectarian affiliation. Vaishnavas wear a vertical v-shaped *tilaka* made from clay. The Śaivite *tilaka*, called *tripundra*, consists of three horizontal strips of holy ash with a dot near the middle, or between the eyebrows. Wearing the *tilaka* is an expression of religious affiliation and pride in one’s beliefs, not unlike the Christian’s cross or the Jew’s *yarmulke*. Elaborate *tilakas* are worn by Hindus today mainly at religious events and when on pilgrimage, though many Hindus wear the simple dot (*bindu*) on the forehead, indicating that they are Hindu, even when moving in the general public. See *bindu*, *Hinduism*, *tripundra*.

**timeless** Outside the condition of time, or not measurable in terms of time

**tirobhāva.** तिरोभाव “Concealment,” same as *tirodhāna*. See *Naṭarāja*, *tirodhāna śakti*

**tirodhāna śakti.** तिरोधानशक्ति “Concealing power” Veiling grace, or God’s power to obscure the soul’s divine nature. *Tirodhāna śakti* is the particular energy of Śiva that binds the three bonds of *ānava*, *karma*, *māyā* to the soul. It is a purposeful limiting of consciousness to give the opportunity to the soul to grow and mature through experience of the world. See *evolution of the soul*, *grace*.

**tīrthayātrā.** तीर्थयात्रा “Journeying to a holy place” Pilgrimage. One of the five sacred duties (*pañcha nitya karmas*) of the Hindu is to journey periodically to one of the innumerable holy spots in India or other countries. Preceded by fasting and continence, it is a time of austerity and purification, when all worldly concerns are set aside and God becomes one’s singular focus. Streams of devout pilgrims are received daily at the many ancient holy sites (*tīrthas*) in India, and tens of thousands at festival times. See *pañcha nitya karma*, *pañcha śraddhā*

**tiru:** திரு “Sacred, holy” The exact Tamil equivalent of *śrī*. Feminine equivalent is *tirumati*. See *śrī*

**Tirukural.** திருக்குறள் “Holy couplets” A treasury of Hindu ethical insight and a literary masterpiece of the Tamil language, written by Śaiva Saint Tiruvalluvar (ca 200 BCE) near present-day Madras. Its nonsectarian wisdom has been adopted by Christians, Muslims, Jains and even atheists. The text focuses primarily on the first three goals of life—*artha* (wealth), *dharma* (conduct) and *kāma* (desire)—but also includes 13 chapters on renun-

ciate *dharma*, relating to life's fourth goal, *moksha* (liberation) In an extraordinarily compact verse form of 14 syllables, the poet presents 133 subjects of ten verses each on relationships, human strengths and foibles, statecraft and more One of the world's earliest ethical texts, the *Tirukural* could well be considered a bible on virtue for the human race In fact, it is sworn on in South Indian courts of law See *Tiruvalluvar*

**Tirumantiram** திருமந்திரம் "Holy incantation" The Nandinātha Sampradāya's oldest Tamil scripture, written ca 200 BCE by Rishi Tirumular It is the earliest of the *Tirumurai*, and a vast storehouse of esoteric *yogic* and *tantric* knowledge It contains the mystical essence of *rāja yoga* and *siddha yoga*, and the fundamental doctrines of the 28 *Śaiva Siddhānta Āgamas*, which in turn are the heritage of the ancient pre-historic traditions of Śaivism As the *Āgamas* themselves are now partially lost, the *Tirumantiram* is a rare source of the complete *Āgamanta* (collection of *Āgamic* lore) Its 3047 verses were, as legend has it, composed in a rather extraordinary way Before writing each verse, Tirumular would meditate for an entire year, then summarize his meditation in a four-line Tamil verse He did this for 3,000 years! The allegory is said to mean that 3,000 years of knowledge is compacted in this one book The text is organized in nine parts, called *tantras*, summarized as follows 1) basic rules of religious morality, 2) allegorical explanations of Śaiva mythological stories, five powers of Śiva, three classifications of souls, 3) a complete treatise on *rāja yoga*, 4) *mantras* and *tantras*, 5) the essential features of the Śaiva religion, the four forms of Śaivism, four stages, unorthodox paths, conduct to be avoided, 6) the Śiva-guru, grace, renunciation, sin, penance, *jñāna*, worthy and unworthy persons, 7) *siddha yoga*, more on grace, *mudrās*, control of *idā* and *pingalā*, worlds reached by different classes of *yogīs* after death, refinements of *yoga*, the *satguru*, 8) essential theology five sheaths, eleven states, three *padārthas* (*Paṭi-pāśu-pāśa*), 36 *tattvas*, four states of consciousness, three *malas*, three *gunas*, ten *kāranas*, etc , 9) the fruits of realization, liberation, *jñāna*, Śiva's dances, meeting of the *guru* See *Tirumurai*, *Tirumular*

**Tirumular** திருமுலர் An illustrious *siddha yogī* and *rishi* of the Nandinātha Sampradāya's Kailāsa Paramparā who came from the Himalayas (ca 200 BCE) to Tamil Nadu to compose the *Tirumantiram* In this scripture he recorded the tenets of Śaivism in concise and precise verse form, based upon his own realizations and the supreme authority of the *Śaiva Āgamas* and the *Vedas* Tirumular was a disciple of Maharishi Nandinātha See *Tirumantiram*, *Kailāsa Paramparā*, *Vedānta*.

**Tirumurai** திருமுறை "Holy book" A twelve-book collection of hymns and writings of South Indian Śaivite saints, compiled by Saint Nambiyandar Nambī (ca 1000) Of these, books 1-3 are the hymns of Saint Tiruñjāna Sambandar (ca 600) Books 4-6 are the hymns of Saint Tirunavakarasu (Appar), a contemporary of Sambandar Book 7 contains the hymns of



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**trickery:** Deception, fraud. Creating illusion, such as by magic

**trident:** Three-pronged spear See *triśūla*.

**Trikaśāsana** त्रिकशासन “Three teachings” Also, *Trikaśāstra* A name for Kashmir Śaivism based on its various philosophical triads including Śiva, Śakti and Nara (bound soul), Pati, *paśu* and *pāśa*, three energies highest (*parā*), lowest (*aparā*), and in-between (*parāparā*), and three sets of scriptures See *Kashmīr Śaivism*

**trikona.** त्रिकोण A triangle, symbol of God Śiva as Absolute Reality Also represents the element fire

**triloka** त्रिलोक “Three worlds” The physical, astral and causal planes (Bhūloka, Antarloka and Śivaloka) See *world, loka*

**Trimūrti.** त्रिमूर्ति A classic representation of God as the three-fold Deity image—Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Rudra. See *Brahmā*

**triple bondage.** See *mala, pāśa*.

**tripundra.** त्रिपुण्ड्र “Three marks” The Śaivite sectarian mark, consisting of three horizontal lines of *vibhūti* (holy ash) on the brow, often with a dot (*bindu*) at the third eye The three lines represent the soul’s three bonds *ānava*, *karma* and *māyā* Holy ash, made of burnt cow dung, is a reminder of the temporary nature of the physical body and the urgency to strive for spiritual attainment and closeness to God See *bindu, tilaka, vibhūti*

**Triśūla** त्रिशूल A three-pronged spear or trident wielded by Lord Śiva and certain Śaivite ascetics Symbolizes God’s three fundamental *śaktis* or powers—*icchā* (desire, will, love), *kriyā* (action) and *jñāna* (wisdom)

**Truth.** When capitalized, ultimate knowing which is unchanging Lower case (truth) honesty, integrity, virtue

**Tryambaka** त्र्यम्बक “Three-eyed one” A name of Rudra-Śiva, one of the Ekādaśa (“eleven”) Rudras His emblems include a water pot, *chakra*, drum, bow, goad, snake and trident. The grace of Tryambaka is beseeched in the famous Mṛitunījāya Mantra, or Śiva Gāyatrī Also the name of a disciple of Durvāsas who disseminated *advaita*. See *Durvāsas, Gāyatrī Mantra*

**Tukārām** तुकाराम Among the most beloved and widely-read of Maharashtra Sant poets (1598–1649) who wrote passionate songs urging devotees to seek the grace of Lord Viṣṇu

**Tulasidāsa** तुलसीदास Vaishṇava *sannyāsin* poet (ca 1532–1623) whose *Śrī Rāmacharitamānasa*, a Hindi rendering of Valmiki’s Sanskrit epic, *Rāmāyana*, is acclaimed one of the world’s greatest literary works See *Rāmāyana*.

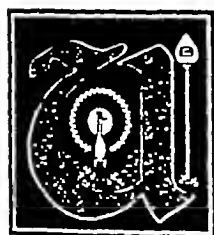
**tumult** Noise, uproar, disturbance, agitation, confusion

**turbulent.** Violently agitated Marked by turmoil or wildly irregular motions

**turmeric:** A plant of India, *Curcuma longa*, of the ginger family whose powdered rhizome is a prized seasoning and yellow dye It has rich *āyurvedic* properties, is used in holy ritual and serves also to make *kunkuma*.

**tyaf** A special bamboo-like script used for writing prayers to be conveyed to the inner worlds through the sacred fire See *lekhaṇārtha havana*.

*tyāga*. त्याग "Letting go, detachment, renunciation" Described in the *Bhagavad Gītā* as the basic principle of *karma yoga*, detachment from the fruits of one's actions See *sacrifice, sannyāsa, vairāgya*



*ucchārana vyākhyā*. उच्चारणव्याख्या "Pronunciation key or explanation"

*ucchishṭa*. उच्छिष्ट "Leavings, remainder" Religiously, the precious leavings from the *guru's* food plate or the waters from the bathing of his feet or sandals which are ingested by devotees as *prasāda*. Partaking of the *satguru's ucchishṭa* is an important means of receiving his vi-

bration and thus creating a psychic connection and harmony with him, being in touch with his grace in a physical way See *prasāda, satguru, pādapūjā*.

*Ujjain* उज्जैन A city on the Sīra River, one of the seven sacred Hindu cities, a traditional holy place of Śaivism See *Rudrasambhu*

ultimate Final, last —Ultimate Reality Final, highest Truth God Śiva's Absolute Reality, Paraśiva

*Umā*. उमा "O do not." A name for Śakti said to derive from the exclamation addressed to Pārvatī by her mother in the *Śiva Purāṇa*, beseeching her to not practice austerities

unconnectedness The quality of being separate, unrelated to or uninvolved  
uncreated. Not created, without origin An attribute of God

undecaying Not decaying or deteriorating

undifferentiated. Uniform Same Not having distinct or different elements

unerring Not making an error, sure Exacting

unevolutionary perfection A term describing God Śiva as eternally complete and flawless and therefore not changing or developing

unfold To open gradually, especially in stages See *spiritual unfoldment*.

unharness To take a harness off, to loosen restraints and make free

unhindered. Free of obstacles Not restrained

universal *dharma*. Cosmic order, *ṛita*. See *dharma*

universal dissolution The final stage in the recurring cosmic cycles of creation in which all manifestation is reabsorbed into God See *mahāpralaya*.

universalist. Applicable to all, including everyone or all groups Any doctrine that emphasizes principles, beliefs or theologies that are or could be acceptable to many or all people, especially as contrasted with sectarian, denominational perspectives Such schools are often syncretic in nature, but firmly based around a core of the original faith of the founder, and usually viewed by adherents as enlightened substitutes to traditional, established faiths See *neo-Indian religion, syncretism*

unleash To release, as by removing a tether or rope

unmanifest. Not evident or perceivable Philosophically, akin to *transcen-*

*dent* God Śiva is unmanifest in His formless perfection, Paraśiva. See *formless*

**unoriginated** Never begun or created God Śiva is unoriginated as He has no beginning See *atattva*, *Paraśiva*, *Primal Soul*.

**unpretentiousness** Modesty, humility Not having false pride about oneself

**unrepressed** Open and honest, not marked by thoughts or feelings that are hidden or held back Not repressed, pushed back or controlled to excess Free of subconscious impulses, compulsions and inhibitions

**unshrouded**: Uncovered Made visible or knowable

**unwind**. To undo something wound, as to unwind the thread from a spool

**upa**. उप A common prefix conveying the meanings "towards, near to (as opposed to *apa*, away), by the side of, with, below"

**upadeśa**. उपदेश "Advice, religious instruction" Often given in question-and-answer form from *guru* to disciple The *satguru's* spiritual discourses

**upadeśi** उपदेशी A liberated soul who chooses to teach, actively helping others to the goal of liberation Contrasted with *nirvāṇi* See *nirvāṇi* and *upadeśi*, *satguru*.

**Upāgama**. उपागम Secondary Āgama. A large body of texts and similar in character to the principle Āgamas Each of the 28 Siddhānta Śaiva Āgamas has as many as 16 *Upāgamas* associated with it, giving more specific or elaborate information on the basic text, their total number is given as 207 or 208

**upagrantha**. उपग्रन्थ "Secondary text." Appendices or additional resources of a book See *Grantha*

**upanayana**. उपनयन "Bringing near" A youth's formal initiation into Vedic study under a *guru*, traditionally as a resident of his *āśrama*, and the investiture of the sacred thread (*yajñopavīta* or *upavīta*), signifying entrance into one of the three upper castes The *upanayana* is among twelve *samskāras* prescribed in the *Dharma Śāstras* and explained in the *Gṛhya Sūtras* It is prescribed between ages 8-16 for *brāhmins* (who received a white thread), 11-22 for *kshatriyas* (red thread), and 12-24 for *vaiśyas* (yellow thread) At present the color white for the sacred thread has been adopted universally The *upanayana* is regarded as a second or spiritual birth, and one so initiated is known as *dvija*, "twice-born" Until about the beginning of the common era, the *upanayana* was also afforded to girls Great value was placed on their learning the *Vedas* in preparation for the duties of married life See *samskāras of childhood*.

**Upanishad** उपनिषद् "Sitting near devotedly" The fourth and final portion of the *Vedas*, expounding the secret, philosophical meaning of the Vedic hymns The *Upanishads* are a collection of profound texts which are the source of Vedānta and have dominated Indian thought for thousands of years They are philosophical chronicles of *rishis* expounding the nature of God, soul and cosmos, exquisite renderings of the deepest Hindu thought.

Traditionally, the number of *Upanishads* is given as 108. Ten to 16 are classified as "major" or "principle" *Upanishads*, being those which philosophers have commented on through the centuries. The *Upanishads* are generally dated later than the *Samhitās* and *Brāhmanas*, though some are actually portions of the *Brāhmanas*. It is thought that most were written down in Sanskrit between 1500 and 600 BCE. In content, these popular and approachable texts revolve around the identity of the soul and God, and the doctrines of reincarnation, of *karma* and of liberation through renunciation and meditation. They are widely available in many languages. Along with the *Bhagavad Gītā* ("song of God") they were the primary scripture to awaken the Western world to the wealth of Hindu wisdom. See *śruti*, *Vedas*, *Vedānta*.

*upāsana*. उपासना "Sitting near" Worship or contemplation of God. One of the *pañcha nitya karmas* "five constant duties." See *sandhyā upāsana*.  
*upasarga* उपसर्ग "Trouble, obstacle." Difficulties, challenges or distractions which retard one's progress on the spiritual path. Numerous lists are given in scripture under the Sanskrit terms *upasarga*, *dosha* (defect, blemish), *klesha*, *vighna* and *antarāya*. The *Yogatattva Upanishad* lists twenty *doshas* including hunger, thirst, excitement, grief, anger and greed, as well as five *vighnas* sloth, boastfulness, bad company, cultivation of *mantras* for wrong reasons and longing for women. Patañjali names nine *antarāyas* to success in *yoga*, including sickness, doubt, sloth, nonattainment and instability. Spiritually, all these obstacles unless overcome lead to a dead end of unhappiness and despair, often affording steps which can only be retraced through reincarnating again. See *purity-impurity*.

*Upaveda*. उपवेद "Secondary *Vedas*." A class of texts on sacred sciences, composed by *rishis* over the course of time to amplify and apply the Vedic knowledge. The four prominent *Upavedas* (each encompassing numerous texts) are *Arthaveda* (statecraft), *Āyurveda* (health), *Dhanurveda* (military science) and *Gāndharvaveda* (music and the arts). Also sometimes classed as *Upavedas* are the *Sthāpatyaveda* (on architecture) and the *Kāma Sāstras* (texts on erotic love). See *Arthaveda*, *Āyurveda*, *Dhanurveda*, *Kāma Sūtra*, *Gāndharvaveda*, *purushārtha*, *Stāpatyaveda*.

*upāya*. उपाय "Means." A term used in Kashmiri Śaivism to describe the means to move from individual into universal consciousness — *ānavopāya*. "Individual, or limited means." Also called *kriyopāya*, the way of ritual worship, *haṭha yoga*, concentration and *yogic* breathing — *śāktopāya*: "Way of power." Active inquiry through mental effort, emphasizing control of awareness, *japa* and meditation — *sāmbhavopāya*. "Way of Sambhu (Śiva)." Also called *icchopāya*, "Way of will." Seeing Śiva everywhere, surrender in God — *anupāya* "No-means." Not really a means, but the goal of the first three *upāyas*—the transcendent condition of Śiva Consciousness. The spontaneous realization of the Self without effort. Also

- called *pratyabhyñā upāya*, “way of recognition” See *Kashmīr Śaivism*.
- upbringing** Childhood education and training
- utmost**: To the highest degree, the very greatest.
- Utpaladeva** उत्पलदेव Disciple (ca 900-950) of *Somānanda* and author of *Pratyabhyñā Sūtras* (also called *Pratyabhyñā Darśana*) and other works See *Kashmīr Śaivism*
- utsava**: उत्सव “Festival” Religious celebrations or holy days and their observance in the home and temple *Utsava* is one of the five constant duties, *pañcha nitya karmas* See *festival*
- utsavaka**. उत्सवक “Festival maker” A person who coordinates arrangements for religious festivals



**Vachana** वचन “Utterance” Short, insightful devotional poems written by the early Vira Śaiva *śaranā* saints Full of wit and brilliant philosophy, they are the basis for Lingāyat philosophy and practice

**vāgdāna** वाग्दान “Word-giving” Marriage engagement ceremony See. *samskāras of adulthood*

**vāhana** वाहन “Bearing, carrying or conveying” Each

Hindu God is depicted as riding an animal or bird *vāhana*, which is symbolic of a function of the God For example, Śiva rides the bull, a symbol of strength and potency Kārttikeya rides the peacock, *mayūra*, emblem of beauty and regality

- vaidya**. वैद्य “Versed in science, learned, a doctor” See *āyurveda vaidya*.
- Vaikāsi Viśākham** வைகாசி விசாகம் A festival held on Viśākha *nakshatra*, near the full moon day of the Tamil month of Vaikāsi, May-June, to celebrate the creation, or “birth,” of Lord Kārttikeya It is a time of gift-giving to *panditas* and great souls, weddings, feedings for the poor, caring for trees, spiritual initiation and conclaves of holy men
- Vaikunṭha**. वैकुण्ठ “Vishnu’s heaven” See *Vaishnavism*
- vairāgi**: वैरागी “Dispassionate one” An ascetic who lives by the principle of *vairāgya*. Also names a particular class of mendicants, generally Vaishnavas, of North India who have freed themselves from worldly desires See *monk, sannyāsa, tyāga*.
- vairāgya**. वैराग्य “Dispassion, aversion” Freedom from passion Distaste or disgust for worldliness because of spiritual awakening Also, the constant renunciation of obstacles on the path to liberation Ascetic or monastic life.
- Vaiśeṣika** वैशेषिक “Distinctionism” A philosophical school (ca 600 BCE) that focuses on understanding the categories of existence. See *śaḍ darśana*.
- Vaishnava**. वैष्णव Of or relating to Vishnu, same as Vaishnavite. A follower of Lord Vishnu or His incarnations See *Vishnu, Vaishnavism*
- Vaishnavism (Vaishnava)** वैष्णव One of the four major religions, or denominations of Hinduism, representing roughly half of the world’s one billion

**Hindus** It gravitates around the worship of Lord Vishnu as Personal God, His incarnations and their consorts. The doctrine of *avatāra* (He who descends), especially important to Vaishnavism, teaches that whenever *adharmā* gains ascendancy in the world, God takes a human birth to reestablish "the way." There are either 10, 22 or 34 *avatāras* of Vishnu, according to various scriptures. The most renowned *avatāras* were Rāma and Kṛishna. The last to come will be Kalki, the harbinger of a golden age on Earth. Vaishnavism stresses the personal aspect of God over the impersonal, and *bhakti* (devotion) as the true path to salvation. The goal of Vaishnavism is the attainment of *mukti*, defined as blissful union with God's body, the loving recognition that the soul is a part of Him, and eternal nearness to Him in Vaikunṭha, heaven. Foremost among Vaishnava scriptures are the *Vaishnava Āgamas*, *Bhagavad Gītā* and *Bhāgavata Purāna*. Among the earliest schools were the Pañcharātras and the Bhāgavatas. The five major contemporary schools (founded between 1000 and 1500) are those of Rāmānuja (Śrī Vaishnavism), Mādhva, Nimbarka, Vallabha and Chaitanya. Philosophically they range from Mādhva's pure dualism to Vallabha's lofty monistic vision.

**Vaishnavite**. Of or relating to Vishnu, same as Vaishnava. A follower of Vishnu or His incarnations. See *Vaishnavism*, *Vishnu*.

**vaīśya**. वैश्य "Landowner, merchant." The social class of bankers, businessmen, industrialists, employers. Merchant class, originally those whose business was trade as well as agriculture. See *varna dharma*.

**vaipadu** வழிபாடு "Ritual worship, revering, following." The acts of adoration of the divine, expressed in many practices and ways.

**Vallabhāchārya**: वल्लभाचार्य "Beloved." Vaishnava saint (ca 1475-1530) whose panentheistic Śuddha Advaita (pure nondualism) philosophy became the essential teaching of the nonascetic Vaishnava sect that bears his name. He composed 17 works, most importantly commentaries on the *Vedānta* and *Mīmāṃsā Sūtras* and the *Bhāgavata Purāna*. The stories of his 84 disciples are often repeated on festive occasions by followers. The sect is strongest in Bombay and Gujarat. See *Vedānta*.

**vāma**. वाय 1) "Pleasant, beautiful, benignant, striving after"—as in Vāmadeva, a name of Śiva. 2) "Left, crooked, acting in the opposite way"—as in *vāma mārga*, the left-handed *tantric* path." See *left-handed, tantrism*.

**vānaprastha āśrama**. वानप्रस्थ आश्रम "Forest-dweller stage." See *āśrama dharma*, *śaśṭīyābda pūrṭi*.

**vanquish**. To defeat or conquer in conflict or competition. See *victors and vanquished*.

**Vārāṇasī**. वाराणसी Also known as Kāśī or Banāras. One of the most holy of Śaivite cities, and among the oldest cities in the world. Located in North India on the Ganges River. Hindus consider it highly sanctifying to die in Kāśī, revering it as a gateway to *moksha*.



**varna:** वर्ण "External appearance, covering, type, species, kind, color, caste  
See *varna dharma*

**varna dharma** वर्णधर्म "The way of one's kind" The hereditary social class system, generally referred to as *caste*, established in India in ancient times Within *varna dharma* are the many religious and moral codes which define human virtue. *Varna dharma* is social duty, in keeping with the principles of good conduct, according to one's community, which is generally based on the craft or occupation of the family Strictly speaking it encompasses two interrelated social hierarchies 1) *varna*, which refers to the four classes *brāhmin*, *kshatriya*, *vaiśya* and *śūdra*, and 2) *jāti*, the myriad occupational subgroups, or guilds, which in India number over 3,000 Hence this *dharma* is sometimes called *jāti dharma* The class-caste system is still very much a part of Indian life today Many modern Hindus propose that social status is now (and was originally) more properly determined by a person's skills and accomplishments than by birth Mobility between *jātis*, or castes, within Hindu communities worldwide is limited but not impossible, and is accomplished through marrying into a new *jāti*, or changing professions through persistence, skill and education *Śāstrīs* say that once a person breaks out of his *varna* or *jāti* of birth and changes "caste," it takes three generations for his family to become fully established in that new strata of society, provided the continuity is unbroken

—**varna:** The four *varnas* are as follows —**brāhmin (brāhmana):** "Mature, evolved soul" Scholarly, pious souls of exceptional learning Hindu scriptures traditionally invest the *brāhmin* class with the responsibility of religious leadership, including teaching and priestly duties —**kshatriya:** "Governing, endowed with sovereignty" Lawmakers and law enforcers and military, also known as *rājanya*. —**vaiśya:** "Landowner, merchant." Businessmen, financiers, industrialists, employers Those engaged in business, commerce and agriculture —**śūdra** "Worker, servant" Skilled artisans and laborers It is in keeping with *varna dharma* that sons are expected to follow the occupation of their father, as that is the occupation that was chosen prior to birth

—**jāti:** "Birth, position assigned by birth, rank, caste, family, race, lineage" *Jāti*, more than *varna*, is the specific determinant of one's social community Traditionally, because of rules of purity each *jāti* is excluded from social interaction with the others, especially from interdining and intermarriage In modern times there is also a large group (one-seventh of India's population in 1981) outside the four *varnas* These are called unscheduled classes, untouchables, *jātihiṭa* ("outcaste"), *chandālas* (specifically those who handle corpses) and *harijan*, a name given by Mahātma Gandhi, meaning "children of God" Untouchable *jātis* included the *mishāda* (hunter), *kaivarta* (fisherman) and *kārāvara* (leather worker)

The *varna dharma* system—despite its widespread discrimination against

*harijans*, and the abuse of social status by higher castes—ensures a high standard of craftsmanship, a sense of community belonging, family integrity and religio-cultural continuity. Caste is not unique to Hinduism and India. By other names it is found in every society. The four *varnas*, or classes, and myriad *jātis*, occupational castes, or guilds, form the basic elements of human interaction. See *jāti*.

**varnāśrama dharma.** वर्णाश्रमधर्म "The way of one's caste and stage of life." Names the social structure of four classes (*varna*), hundreds of castes (*jāti*) and four stages of life (*āśramas*). It is the combined principles of *varna dharma* and *āśrama dharma*. See *āśrama dharma*, *dharma*, *varna dharma*.

**vāsanā.** वासना "Subconscious inclination." From *vās*, "living, remaining." The subliminal inclinations and habit patterns which as driving forces, color and motivate one's attitudes and future actions. *Vāsanās* are the conglomerate results of subconscious impressions (*samskāras*) created through experience. *Samskāras*, experiential impressions, combine in the subconscious to form *vāsanās*, which thereafter contribute to mental fluctuations, called *vṛtti*. Taken as a whole, *vāsanās* form a dimension of the mind called the sub-subconscious, or *vāsanā chitta*. See *samskāra*, *manomaya kośa*, *mind* (five states), *vṛtti*.

**Vāsishṭha:** वसिष्ठ Disciple of Maharishi Nandikeśvara (Nandinātha) (ca 250 BCE) along with Patañjali and Vyāghrapāda (as recorded in Pāṇini's book of grammar). Also the name of several other famous sages, including the *rishi* attributed with composing the hymns of the *Rig Veda*'s seventh maṇḍala, another who plays a central role in the epics and certain *Purāṇas* and *Upanishads*, and a third who expounds the ancient yogic wisdom to Lord Rāma in the 29,000-verse *Yoga Vāsishṭha*.

**Vasugupta.** वसुगुप्त Celebrated preceptor (ca 800) whose finding of the *Śiva Sūtras* catalyzed the reemergence of the ancient Kashmir Śaiva tradition. It is said that he discovered the 77 *sūtras* carved in a rock on Mahādeva mountain after a visionary dream in which Lord Śiva told him of their location. The sacred rock, named Śankarpal, is revered to this day. See *Kashmir Śaivism*, *Śiva Sūtras*.

**vaśa** वट The banyan tree, *Ficus indicus* sacred to Śiva. Thought to derive from *vaś*, "to surround, encompass"—also called *nyagrodha*, "growing downwards." Ancient symbol of the Sanātana Dharma. Its relative, the *aśvattha*, or *pīpal* tree, is given in the *Upanishads* as a metaphor for creation, with the "roots above and the branches below."

**vāta.** वात "Movement." *Vāyu*, "air-ether." One of the three bodily humors, called *dosha*, *vāta* is known as the air humor. Principle of movement in the body. *Vāta dosha* governs such functions as breathing and movement of the muscles and tissues. See *āyurveda*, *dosha*.

**vault:** An arched roof, ceiling or chamber.

**Veda:** वेद "Wisdom." Sagely revelations which comprise Hinduism's most

authoritative scripture They, along with the *Āgamas*, are *śruti*, “that which is heard” The *Vedas* are a body of dozens of holy texts known collectively as the *Veda*, or as the four *Vedas* *Rig*, *Yajur*, *Sāma* and *Atharva*. In all they include over 100,000 verses, as well as additional prose The knowledge imparted by the *Vedas* is highly mystical or superconscious rather than intellectual Each *Veda* has four sections *Samhitās* (hymn collections), *Brāhmanas* (priestly manuals), *Āranyakas* (forest treatises) and *Upanishads* (enlightened discourses) The *Samhitās* and *Brāhmanas* (together known as the *karmakānda*, “ritual section”) detail a transcendent-immanent Supreme-Being cosmology and a system of worship through fire ceremony and chanting to establish communication with the Gods The *Āranyakas* and *Upanishads* (the *jñānakānda*, “knowledge section”) outline the soul’s evolutionary journey, providing *yogic*-philosophic training and propounding a lofty, nondual realization as the destiny of all souls The oldest portions of the *Vedas* are thought to date back as far as 6,000 BCE, written down in Sanskrit in the last few millennia, making them the world’s most ancient scriptures See *Āranyaka*, *Brāhmaṇa*, *śruti*, *Upanishad*.

**Vedāṅga** वेदाङ्ग “Veda-limb” Six branches of post-Vedic studies revered as auxiliary to the *Vedas* Four *Vedāṅgas* govern correct chanting of the *Vedas* 1) *Śikshā* (phonetics), 2) *Chandas* (meter), 3) *Nirukta* (etymology), 4) *Vyākaraṇa* (grammar) The two other *Vedāṅgas* are 5) *Jyotiṣa Vedāṅga* (astronomy-astrology) and 6) *Kalpa Vedāṅga* (procedural canon) which includes the *Śrauta* and *Śulba Śāstras* (ritual codes), *Dharma Śāstras* (social law) and *Grihya Śāstras* (domestic codes) See *Kalpa Vedāṅga* and individual entries

**Vedānta** वेदान्त “Ultimate wisdom” or “final conclusions of the *Vedas*” *Vedānta* is the system of thought embodied in the *Upanishads* (ca 1500-600 BCE), which give forth the ultimate conclusions of the *Vedas* Through history there developed numerous *Vedānta* schools, ranging from pure dualism to absolute monism The first and original school is Advaita Īśvaravāda, “monistic theism” or panentheism, exemplified in the *Vedānta-Siddhānta* of Ṛṣi Tirumular (ca 250 BCE) of the Nandinātha Sampradāya in his *Tirumantram*, which is a perfect summation of both the *Vedas* and the *Āgamas* This is a dipolar reconciliation of monism and dualism which, as philosopher-statesman Dr S Rādhākṛṣṇan (1888–1975) declared, best depicts the philosophy of the *Upanishads* After about 700 CE, many other schools developed, each establishing itself through written commentaries on the major *Upanishads*, the *Bhagavad Gītā* and the *Brahma Sūtras* The latter text, authored by Bādarāyana (ca 400 BCE), is the earliest known systematization of *Vedānta*, but its extremely terse aphorisms are philosophically illusive without further commentary During the “scholastic era” (700–1700), three main variations of the original *Vedānta* were developed 1) Advaita *Vedānta*, or pure nondualism, exemplified by Śankara (788–820),

2) Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta, or qualified nondualism, most fully expressed by Rāmānuja (1017-1137), and 3) Dvaita Vedānta, expounded by Mādhva (1197-1278)

Panentheism is embodied in those qualified nondual Vedānta schools that accept the ultimate identity of the soul and God. Examples are the Viśiṣṭādvaita of Bhāskara (ca 950), the Śuddha Advaita, "pure nondualism," of Vallabha (ca 1475-1530) and, to a lesser degree, the Viśiṣṭādvaita of Rāmānuja.

In summary Mādhva, the dualist, conceives Brahman to be the Personal God. In his philosophy, the universe, souls and God are all separate from one another and real. Rāmānuja, the qualified nondualist, also conceives Brahman to be the Personal God. In his philosophy, God must not be considered apart from the world and souls, for the three together form a one whole. The world and souls are real as the body of God, and the individual soul feels himself to be part of God. Śankara, the strict *advaitist*, conceives Brahman to be the Impersonal God, the Absolute. Śankara does not deny the existence of the Personal God, known as Īśvara, but declares Īśvara to be equally as unreal as the universe and the individuality of the soul. In truth, the only Reality is the Absolute, and man is that Absolute. To Rishī Tirumalar, the panentheist, there is an eternal oneness of God and man at the level of their inner Being, but a difference is acknowledged during the evolution of the soul. Ultimately even this difference merges in identity. Thus, there is perfectly beginningless oneness and a temporary difference which resolves itself in perfect identity.

The great Bengali saint, Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa (1836-1886), further summarized the three medieval Vedānta schools with characteristically profound simplicity. Dvaita: "When I think of myself as identified with the body, I am Thy servant and Thou art my Master. My will is controlled by Thy will." Viśiṣṭādvaita: "When I think of myself as a soul as distinct from the body, I am the part and Thou art the Whole." Advaita: "When I recognize the spiritual principle in me as distinct from body, mind and soul, I realize that I am one with the Divine." To complete the analysis, we would say that the enlightened unification of all three views is Advaita Īśvaravāda, or panentheism.

Vedānta is one of the six classical philosophies (*śaḍ darśanas*) along with Nyāya, Vaiśeṣika, Sāṅkhya, Yoga and Mīmāṃsā. Vedānta is also called *Uttara Mīmāṃsā*, "upper or later examination," as distinguished from *Pūrva Mīmāṃsā*, which concerned itself solely with the earlier portions of the *Veda*. Other important schools of Vedānta include the Dvaitādvaita, "dual-nondualism," of Nimbārka (ca 1150), and the Achintya Bhedābheda, "unthinkable difference-nondifference," of Chaitanya (1485-1534). See *acosmic pantheism*, *Advaita Īśvaravāda*, *dvaita-advaita*, *monistic theism*, *Mādhva*, *panentheism*, *Rāmānuja*, *Tirumantiram*, *Vallabha*.

**Vedic-Āgamic** Simultaneously drawing from and complying with both of Hinduism's revealed scriptures (*śruti*), *Vedas* and *Āgamas*, which represent two complimentary, intertwining streams of history and tradition. The difference between Siddhānta and Vedānta is traditionally described in the following way. While the *Vedas* depict man looking for God, the *Āgamas* hold the perspective of God looking to help man. This is reflected in the fact that while the *Vedas* are voiced by *ṛishis*, God or the Goddess is the giver of truth in the *Āgama* texts. See *grace*, *śruti*.

**vegetarian** *Śakāhāra* Of a diet which excludes meat, fish, fowl and eggs. Vegetarianism is a principle of health and environmental ethics that has been a keystone of Indian life for thousands of years. Vegetarian foods include grains, fruits, vegetables, legumes and dairy products. Natural, fresh foods, locally grown, without insecticides or chemical fertilizers, are preferred. The following foods are minimized: frozen and canned foods, highly processed foods, such as white rice, white sugar and white flour, and "junk" foods and beverages (those with abundant chemical additives, such as artificial sweeteners, colorings, flavorings and preservatives). A person following a vegetarian diet is called a *śakāhārī*. See *guna*, *mānsāhārī*, *yama-niyama*.

**veil** A piece of cloth used to conceal. To cover or hide.

**veiling grace** *Tirobhāva śakti* The divine power that limits the soul's perception by binding or attaching the soul to the bonds of *ānava*, *karma*, and *māyā*—enabling it to grow and evolve as an individual being. See *grace*.

**vel.** வேல் "Spear, lance." The symbol of Lord Kārttikeya's divine authority as Lord of *yoga* and commander of the *devas* (Known as *śūla* in Sanskrit). See *Kārttikeya*.

**Vellore.** வேலூர் See *Chinna Bomman*.

**venerate** To love or consider with respect and admiration, to revere. From the Latin *veneratus*, to worship, reverence.

**vengeful** Desiring or seeking to return injury for injury. Wanting revenge.

**venture.** To risk. To express in words at the risk of criticism.

**veracity** Honesty, truthfulness, accuracy.

**vermilion** Bright red.

**veshti** வேஷ்டி A long, unstitched cloth like a sarong, wound about the waist and reaching below the ankles. Traditional Hindu apparel for men. It can be wrapped in many different styles. A Tamil word derived from the Sanskrit *veshṭana*, "encircling." Also called *vetti* (Tamil) or *dhoti* (Hindi).

**vestments** The clothing, especially official robes or other garb, worn by religious persons, often as a sign of their spiritual position or ordination.

**vibhūti** விபூதி "Resplendent, powerful." Holy ash, prepared by burning cow dung along with other precious substances, milk, *ghee*, honey, etc. It symbolizes purity and is one of the main sacraments given at *pūjā* in all Śaivite temples and shrines. Śaivites wear three stripes on the brow as a distinct

sectarian mark, as do many Smārtas *Vibhūti* is also a synonym for *siddhi*, supernormal powers developed through *yoga* practice. It is the title of the third chapter of Patañjali's *Yoga Sūtras*, which discusses *siddhis* See *tilaka tripundra*.

**vice** Fault or failing Corrupt habits, depravity From the Sanskrit *vishu*, meaning, "adverse, in opposite directions"

**victors and vanquished** Those who triumph and those who are defeated in battle, debate or any competition A concept or attitude about winning and losing derived from dualistic beliefs, which can lead to *adharma*, *himsā*, etc.

**vid.** विद् "To know" Verbal root of *Veda* and *vidyā*, "knowledge."

**videhamukti** विदेहमुक्ति "Disembodied liberation" Release from reincarnation through *nirvikalpa samādhi*—the realization of the Self, Paraśiva—at the point of death Blessed are those who are aware that departure, *mahāsamādhi*, is drawing near They settle all affairs, make amends and intensify personal *sādhana*. They seek the silver channel of *sushumnā* which guides *kundalinī* through the door of *Brahman* into the beyond of the beyond They seek total renunciation as the day of transition looms strongly in their consciousness Those who know that Lord Yama is ready to receive them, seek to merge with Śiva They seek *nirvikalpa samādhi* as the body and earthly life fall away Those who succeed are the *videhamuktas*, honored as among those who will never be reborn Hindu tradition allows for vows of renunciation, called *ātura sannyāsa dikshā*, to be taken and the orange robe donned by the worthy *sādhaka* or householder in the days prior to death See *jīvanmukti*, *kaivalya*, *moksha*, *Paraśiva*, *Self Realization*

**vidyā** विद्या "Knowledge, learning, science" The power of understanding gained through study and meditation Contrasted with *avidyā*, ignorance

**vidyārambha** विद्यारम्भ "Commencement of learning" See *samskāras of childhood*.

**Vighneśvara.** विघ्नेश्वर "Lord of Obstacles" A name for Lord Ganeśa describing His power to both remove and create obstacles to guide souls along the right path See *Ganeśa*.

**Vijayanagara.** विजयनगर "City of Victory" Opulent city and last Indian empire, centered in present-day Karnataka state, which extended as far as Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines It flourished from 1336 to 1565, at which time it began to disintegrate following defeat at the hand of Muslim armies However, its existence and strength did serve to prevent Muslim expansion into South India. Awed visitors recounted its fabulously rich culture and great wealth Site of extensive recent archeological renovation

**viññānamaya kośa** विज्ञानमयकोश "Sheath of cognition" The soul's mental or cognitive-intuitive sheath, also called the actinodic sheath See *kośa*, *mental body*, *soul*.

**Vināyaka.** विनायक "Remover" A name of Lord Ganeśa, meaning the remover of obstacles (sometimes preceded by *vighna*, "obstacle") See. *Ganeśa*.

**Vināyaka Ahaval** விநாயகா அகவல “Poem to Vināyaka” Famous Tamil poem in praise of Ganeśa by the 8th-century woman saint, Auvaiyar

**Vināyaka Vratam** விநாயகவிரதம் A 21-day festival to Lord Ganeśa beginning on the full-moon day of November-December An important festival in Tamil Nadu and in Tamil communities worldwide, when special *pūjās* are conducted in Ganeśa temples, and devotees make a vow (*vrata*), such as to attend the daily *pūjā*, or to fast by taking only one meal a day

**Vīra Śaivism (Śaiva)** வீரशैव “Heroic Śaivism” Made prominent by Basavanna in the 12th century Also called Lingāyat Śaivism Followers, called Lingāyats, Lingavantas or Śivaśaranās, always wear a Śivalinga on their person Vīra Śaivites are proudly egalitarian and emphasize the personal relationship with Śiva, rather than temple worship Vīra Śaiva priests, *jangamas*, conduct marriages and other domestic rites and also act as *gurus* or teachers Among the most central texts are Basavanna’s *Vachanas*, Allama Prabhu’s *Mantragopya*, Chennabasavanna’s *Kāraṇa Hasuge*, and the collected work called *Śūnya Sampādane*. The monistic-theistic doctrine of Vīra Śaivism is called Śakti Viśiṣṭādvaita—a version of qualified nondualism which accepts both difference and nondifference between soul and God, like rays are to the sun In brief, Śiva and the cosmic force or existence are one (“Śiva are you, you shall return to Śiva”) Yet, Śiva is beyond His creation, which is real, not illusory God is both efficient and material cause In Vīra Śaivism, Śiva divides from His Absolute state into Linga (Supreme Lord) and *āṅga*, individual soul, the two eventually reuniting in undifferentiated oneness There are three aspects of Śivalinga 1) *Iṣṭalinga*, personal form of Śiva, in which He fulfills desires and removes afflictions—God as bliss or joy, 2) *Bhāvalinga*, Śiva beyond space and time, the highest divine principle, knowable through intuition, 3) *Prāṇalinga*, the reality of God which can be apprehended by the mind The soul merges with Śiva by a progressive, six-stage path called *ṣaṭsthala*, consisting of *bhakti* (devotion), *maheśa* (charity and selfless service), *prasāda* (seeking Śiva’s grace), *Prāṇalinga* (experience of all as Śiva), *śaranā* (egoless refuge in Śiva) and *aikya* (oneness with Śiva) Today Vīra Śaivism is a vibrant faith, particularly strong in its religious homeland of Karnataka, South Central India. Roughly 40 million people live here, of which perhaps 25% are members of the Vīra Śaiva religion Early on, they rejected *brāhminical* authority, and along with it the entire caste system and the *Vedas* By rejecting the *Vedas*, they continue to stand outside mainstream Hinduism, but in their profound love of Śiva and acceptance of certain *Śaiva Āgamas*, as well as the main truths of the Vedic wisdom, they have identified themselves as a unique Śaiva sect Though they have established their faith as a distinct and independent religion in Indian courts of law, they are still widely embraced as devout brothers and sisters of the Hindu *dharma*. See *Lingavanta, Śaivism*

**virginal** Characteristic of a virgin Pure —virginal God Reference to Lord

**Kārttikeya**, the perpetual bachelor, descriptive of His inherent purity  
*visarjana* विसर्जन "Departure" See *Ganeśa Chaturthī*

**Vishnu**. विष्णु "All-pervasive" Supreme Deity of the Vaishnavite religion God as personal Lord and Creator, the All-Loving Divine Personality, who periodically incarnates and lives a fully human life to reestablish *dharma* whenever necessary In Śaivism, Vishnu is Śiva's aspect as Preserver See *Vaishnavism*

**visionary** Characteristic of one who has visions, a prophet, evolved seer  
*Viśiṣṭādvaita* विशिष्टाद्वैत "Qualified nondualism" Best known as the term used by Rāmānuja (ca 1017-1137) to name his Vaishnava Vedānta philosophy, which is nondualistic in that the ultimate truth or reality is one, not two, and souls are in fact part of God And it is "qualified" in that souls are fully one with God, but not identical Thus there is a full union which is somewhat shy of total merger Śiva *Viśiṣṭādvaita* was the term chosen by Bhāskara (ca 950) to name his philosophy See *Śiva Advaita*, *Vedānta*  
**visualize (visualization)** To imagine, create mental images Exercising the power of thought to create the future

**viśuddha chakra**. विशुद्धचक्र "Wheel of purity" The fifth *chakra*. Center of divine love See *chakra*.

**viśvagrāsa** विश्वग्रास "Total absorption" The final merger of the soul in Śiva at the fulfillment of its evolution It is ultimate union of the individual soul body with the body of Śiva—Parameśvara—within the Śivaloka, from whence the soul was first emanated This occurs at the end of the soul's evolution, after the four outer sheaths—*annamaya kośa*, *prāṇamaya kośa*, *manomaya kośa* and *vijñānamaya kośa*—have been dropped off Finally, *ānandamaya kośa*, the soul form itself, merges in the Primal Soul Individuality is lost as the soul becomes Śiva, the creator, preserver, destroyer, veiler and revealer Individual identity expands into universality Having previously merged in Paraśiva and Parāśakti in states of *samādhi*, the soul now fully merges into Parameśvara and is one with all three of Śiva's perfections Jīva has totally become Śiva—not a new and independent Śiva, as might be construed, for there is and can only be one Supreme God Śiva This fulfilled merger can happen at the moment the physical body is dropped off, or after eons of time following further unfoldment of the higher *chakras* in the inner worlds—all depending on the maturity, ripeness and intentions of the soul, by which is meant the advanced soul's choice to be either an *upadeśī* or a *nirvāṇī* See *ātman*, *evolution of the soul*, *nirvāṇī* and *upadeśī*, *samādhi*, *soul*.

**vitala**. वितल "Region of negation" Region of raging anger and viciousness The second *chakra* below the *mūlādhāra*, centered in the thighs Corresponds to the second astral netherworld beneath the earth's surface, called Avichī ("joyless") or Vitala See *chakra*, *loka*, *Naraka*.

**vivāha**. विवाह "Marriage" See *samskāras*



**Viveka Chūdāmaṇi.** विवेकचूडामणि “Crest jewel of discrimination” A famous text by Śankara (788-820) on discipline and discrimination between the real and the unreal as the way to God

**Viveka Mārtanda** विवेकमार्तण्ड A philosophic treatise of the Siddha Siddhānta school of Śaivism ascribed to Gorakshanātha (ca 900)

**Vivekānanda, Swāmī** विवेकानन्द Disciple of Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa who was overtaken by an ardent love of Hinduism and a missionary zeal that drove him onward He attained *mahāsamādhi* at age 39 (1863-1902) Most notable among his achievements was a trip around the world on which he gave brilliant lectures, especially in Europe and America, that created much respect for Hinduism In India he founded the Rāmakṛṣṇa Mission which thrives today internationally with over 100 centers and nearly 1,000 *sannyāsins* He is credited, along with Tagore, Aurobindo, Rādhākṛṣṇan and others, with sparking the modern Hindu revival See *jñāna yoga, Rāmakṛṣṇa vivify* To give life to, or make more active, influential, etc

**void** An empty space Philosophically, emptiness itself The absence of time, form and space God Śiva in His perfection as Paraśiva, as a sacred void, but not “like the emptiness inside of an empty box [It] is the fullness of everything” See *Paraśiva*

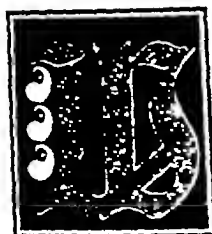
**votary** A person committed by a vow A devotee, a monk or nunk.

**vrata** व्रत “Vow, religious oath” Often a vow to perform certain disciplines over a period of time, such as penance, fasting, specific *mantra* repetitions, worship or meditation *Vratas* extend from the simplest personal promise to irrevocable vows made before God, Gods, *guru* and community See *marriage covenant, sannyāsa dikshā, Vināyaka Vratam*

**vrutti** वृत्ति “Whirlpool” In *yoga* psychology, names the fluctuations of consciousness, the waves of mental activities (*chitta vrutti*) of thought and perception A statement from Patañjali’s *Yoga Sūtras* (1.2) reads, “*Yoga* is the restraint (*nirodha*) of mental activity (*chitta vrutti*)” In general use, *vrutti* means 1) course of action, mode of life, conduct, behavior, way in which something is done, 2) mode of being, nature, kind, character See *mind (individual), rāja yoga*.

**Vyāghrapāda** व्याघ्रपाद “Tiger feet” Famous Nandinātha Sampradāya *siddha* (ca 200 BCE), trained under Maharishi Nandinātha, was a brother disciple of *ṛishis* Tirumular and Patañjali He pilgrimaged south from Kashmir, settling at Tamil Nadu’s Chidambaram Śiva Temple to practice *yoga* See *Kailāsa Paramparā*

**Vyākaraṇa Vedāṅga** व्याकरणवेदाङ्ग Auxiliary Vedic texts on Sanskrit grammar Vyākaraṇa is among four linguistic skills taught for mastery of the *Vedas* and the rites of *yajña* The term literally means “separation, or explanation” The most celebrated *Vyākaraṇa* work is Pāṇini’s 4,000-*sūtra* *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, which set the linguistic standards for classical Sanskrit (ca 400 BCE) See *Vedāṅga*



wane. To decrease "On the wane" in the process of decreasing or disappearing  
 warp and woof: In the art of weaving, warp names the lengthwise threads that give structure to the cloth, woof denotes the crossing threads that give design and color Taken together, the expression "warp and woof" means the very fiber or essence of a thing

waver To vacillate, showing doubt or indecision Characteristic of not being firm-minded To be unsure of oneself See *conversion to Hinduism*

wealth Artha. Abundance, financial stability See *purushārtha*

wedding pendant: A gold ornament worn by the Hindu wife around the neck representing her vows of matrimony Known as *mangala sūtra* in Sanskrit, and *tali* in Tamil She reveres it as an image of her husband and ritually worships it during her morning devotions

whence. From where Whence does it come? Where does it come from?

whirling To move rapidly in a circular motion

wield. To hold and use with skill

wisdom The timely application of knowledge The power of judging the best course of action, based on understanding, knowledge and experience

withholding: To refrain from giving Not granting

woeful Sad, pitiful, full of sorrow —woeful birth. An unfavorable birth, a life of difficulties resulting from negative *karmas* accrued in previous lives

wondrous Inspiring awe, extraordinary, mirific

woodwind. A wind instrument such as the flute or the Indian *nāgasvara*.

woof See *warp and woof*

*Words of Our Master* A collection of sayings and inspiring statements of Sage Yogaswāmī of Sri Lanka—compiled from the notes and recollections of devotees

world. In Hindu theology, world refers to 1) *loka*: a particular region of consciousness or plane of existence 2) *māyā* The whole of manifest existence, the phenomenal universe, or cosmos In this sense it transcends the limitations of physical reality, and can include emotional, mental and spiritual, physical realms of existence, depending on its use Also denoted by the terms *prakṛiti* and *Brahmāṇḍa* 3) *pāśa* In Śaivism, the term world is often used to translate the term *pāśa* in the Āgamic triad of fundamentals—*Paśu, pāśa, "God, soul, world"* It is thus defined as the "fetter" (*pāśa*) that binds the soul, veiling its true nature and enabling it to grow and evolve through experience as an individual being In this sense, the world, or *pāśa*, is three-fold, comprising *ānava* (the force of individuation), *karma* (the principle of cause and effect) and *māyā* (manifestation, the principle of matter, Śiva's mirific energy, the sixth *tattva*) See *Brahmāṇḍa, microcosm-macrocosm, sarvabhadra, Śivamaya, tattva*.

**worldly** Materialistic, unspiritual Devoted to or concerned with the affairs or pleasures of the world, especially excessive concern to the exclusion of religious thought and life Connoting ways born of the lower *chakras* jealous, greed, selfishness, anger, guile, etc —**worldliness** The state or quality of being worldly —**worldly wise** Knowledgeable in the ways of the world. Street wise Sophisticated See *materialism*, *samsārī*

**wrath** Intense anger Rage

**written prayers** See *lekhaṇārtha havana*

**wrought** Formed, fashioned, crafted, built



**yajña** यज्ञ “Worship, sacrifice” One of the most central Hindu concepts—sacrifice and surrender through acts of worship, inner and outer 1) A form of ritual worship especially prevalent in Vedic times, in which oblations—*ghee*, grains, spices and exotic woods—are offered into a fire according to scriptural injunctions while special *mantras* are chanted The element fire,

*Agni*, is revered as the divine messenger who carries offerings and prayers to the Gods The ancient *Veda Brāhmanas* and the *Śrauta Śāstras* describe various types of *yajña* rites, some so elaborate as to require hundreds of priests, whose powerful chanting resounds for miles These major *yajñas* are performed in large, open-air structures called *yāgaśālā* Domestic *yajñas*, prescribed in the *Gṛhya Śāstras*, are performed in the family compound or courtyard *Yajña* requires four components, none of which may be omitted *dravya*, sacrificial substances, *tyāga*, the spirit of sacrificing all to God, *devatā*, the celestial beings who receive the sacrifice, and *mantra*, the empowering word or chant

While *pūjā* (worship in temples with water, lights and flowers) has largely replaced the *yajña*, this ancient rite still continues, and its specialized priestly training is carried on in schools in India *Yajñas* of a grand scale are performed for special occasions, beseeching the Gods for rain during drought, or for peace during bloody civil war Even in temples, *yajña* has its Āgamic equivalent in the *agnikāraka*, the *homa* or *havana* ceremony, held in a fire pit (*homakunda*) in an outer *mandapa* of a temple as part of elaborate *pūjā* rites

2) Personal acts of worship or sacrifice Life itself is a *jīvayajña*. The *Upaṇishads* suggest that one can make “inner *yajñas*” by offering up bits of the little self into the fires of *sādhana* and *tapas* until the greater Self shines forth The five daily *yajñas*, *pañcha mahāyajña*, of the householder (outlined in the *Dharma Śāstras*) ensure offerings to *ṛishis*, ancestors, Gods, creatures and men They are as follows —*brahma yajña*. (also called *Veda yajña* or *ṛishi yajña*) “Homage to the seers” Accomplished through studying and teaching the *Vedas* —*deva yajña* “Homage to Gods and elementals”

Recognizing the debt due to those who guide nature, and the feeding of them by pouring into the fire This is the *homa* sacrifice — *pitṛi yajña* "Homage to ancestors" Offering of cakes (*pinda*) and water to the family line and the progenitors of mankind — *bhūta yajña*. "Homage to beings" Placing food-offerings, *bali*, on the ground, intended for animals, birds, insects, wandering outcasts and beings of the invisible worlds ("Let him gently place on the ground [food] for dogs, outcasts, *svapachas*, those diseased from sins, crows and insects" *Manu Dharma Sāstras* 3 92) — *manushya yajña* "Homage to men" Feeding guests and the poor, the homeless and the student *Manushya yajña* includes all acts of philanthropy, such as tithing and charity The Vedic study is performed in the morning The other four *yajñas* are performed just before taking one's noon meal *Manu Dharma Sāstras* (3 80) states, "Let him worship, according to the rule, the *ṛishis* with *Veda* study, the *devas* with *homa*, the *pitṛis* with *śrāddha*, men with food, and the *bhūtas* with *bali*" Mystics warn that all offerings must be tempered in the fires of *kundalinī* through the power of inner *yajña* to be true and valuable, just as the fire of awareness is needed to indelibly unprint ideas and concepts on one's own *āklāśic* window See *dharma*, *havana*, *homa*, *pūjā*, *sacrifice*.

*Yājñiavalkya Smṛiti*. याज्ञवल्क्यस्मृति A Hindu code of law, one of the *Dharma Sāstras*, regarded second in authority only to the earlier *Manu Dharma Sāstras*. See *Dharma Sāstra*, *smṛiti*

*Yājñiavalkya Upanishad*. याज्ञवल्क्य उपनिषद् A metrical rendering of the *Jābāla Upanishad*, which expounds on *sannyāsa*, renunciation of worldly life in the quest for liberation

*Yajñopavīta*. यज्ञोपवीत "Sacred thread" See *upanayana*

*Yajur Veda* यजुर्वेद "Wisdom of sacrificial formulas" One of the four compendia of revelatory texts called *Vedas* (*Rig*, *Sāma*, *Yajur* and *Atharva*) When used alone, the term *Yajur Veda* generally refers to this *Veda*'s central and oldest portion—the *Samhitā*, "hymn collection" Of this there are two recensions 1) the *Kṛishna* ("black") *Yajur Veda* (so-called because the commentary, *Brāhmaṇa*, material is mixed with the hymns), and 2) the *Śukla* ("white or clear") *Yajur Veda* (with no commentary among the hymns) The contents of these two recensions are also presented in different order The *Yajur Veda Samhitā* is divided into 40 chapters and contains 1,975 stanzas About 30 percent of the stanzas are drawn from the *Rig Veda Samhitā* (particularly from chapters eight and nine) This *Veda* is a special collection of hymns to be chanted during *yajña*. The *Kṛishna Yajur Veda Samhitā* exists today in various recensions, most importantly the *Taittirīya Samhitā* and the *Maitrāyaṇī Samhitā*. The *Śukla Yajur Veda Samhitā* is preserved most prominently as the *Vājasaneyi Samhitā*. See *Vedas*

*Yama*. यम "The restrainer" Hindu God of death, oversees the processes of death transition, guiding the soul out of its present physical body See *death*

**yama-niyama** यम नियम The first two of the eight limbs of *rāja yoga*, constituting Hinduism's fundamental ethical codes, the *yamas* and *niyamas* are the essential foundation for all spiritual progress. They are codified in numerous scriptures including the *Śāṇḍilya* and *Varuḥa Upanishads*, *Hatha Yoga Pradīpikā* by Gorakshanātha, the *Tirumantiram* of Tirumular and the *Yoga Sūtras* of Patañjali. All the above texts list ten *yamas* and ten *niyamas*, with the exception of Patañjali's classic work, which lists only five of each. The *yamas* are the ethical restraints, the *niyamas* are the religious practices. Because it is brief, the entire code can be easily memorized and reviewed daily by the spiritual aspirant. Here are the ten traditional *yamas* and ten *niyamas* — *yamas*: 1) *ahimsā* "Noninjury" Not harming others by thought, word, or deed 2) *satya* "Truthfulness" Refraining from lying and betraying promises 3) *asteya* "Nonstealing" Neither stealing, nor coveting nor entering into debt. 4) *brahmacharya* "Divine conduct." Controlling lust by remaining celibate when single, leading to faithfulness in marriage 5) *kṣamā* "Patience" Restraining intolerance with people and impatience with circumstances 6) *dhṛiti* "Steadfastness" Overcoming nonperseverance, fear, indecision and changeableness 7) *dayā* "Compassion" Conquering callous, cruel and insensitive feelings toward all beings 8) *ārjava* "Honesty, straightforwardness" Renouncing deception and wrongdoing 9) *mitāhāra* "Moderate appetite" Neither eating too much nor consuming meat, fish, fowl or eggs 10) *śauca* "Purity" Avoiding impurity in body, mind and speech — *niyamas*: 1) *hrī* "Remorse" Being modest and showing shame for misdeeds 2) *santosa* "Contentment." Seeking joy and serenity in life 3) *dāna* "Giving" Tithing and giving generously without thought of reward 4) *āstikya* "Faith" Believing firmly in God, Gods, *guru* and the path to enlightenment 5) *Īśvarapūjana* "Worship of the Lord" The cultivation of devotion through daily worship and meditation 6) *siddhānta śravaṇa*: "Scriptural listening" Studying the teachings and listening to the wise of one's lineage 7) *matī* "Cognition" Developing a spiritual will and intellect with the *guru's* guidance 8) *vrata* "Sacred vows" Fulfilling religious vows, rules and observances faithfully 9) *japa* "Recitation" Chanting *mantras* daily 10) *tapas* "Austerity" Performing *sādhana*, penance, *tapas* and sacrifice. Patañjali lists the *yamas* as *ahimsā*, *satya*, *asteya*, *brahmacharya* and *aparigraha* (noncovetousness), and the *niyamas* as *śauca*, *santosa*, *tapas*, *svādhyāya* (self-reflection, scriptural study) and *Īśvarapranidhāna* (worship). See *rāja yoga*.

**yantra** यन्त्र "Vessel, container" A mystic diagram composed of geometric and alphabetic figures—usually etched on small plates of gold, silver or copper. Sometimes rendered in three dimensions in stone or metal. The purpose of a *yantra* is to focus spiritual and mental energies according to computer-like *yantric* pattern, be it for health, wealth, childbearing or the invoking of one God or another. It is usually installed near or under the

temple Deity Psychically seen, the temple *yantra* is a magnificent three-dimensional edifice of light and sound in which the *devas* work. On the astral plane, it is much larger than the temple itself — *Śrī Chakra* The most well-known *yantra* and a central image in Śākta worship Consisting of nine interlocking triangles, it is the design of Śiva-Śakti's multidimensional manifestations *Yantras* are also used for meditation and *sādhana*, especially in the Śākta tradition Installing them beneath Deities is a fairly modern practice, while the *Āgamas* prescribe the placement of precious gems For Śaivites the Tiru-ambala *chakra*, representing Lord Naṭarāja, is most sacred See. *mūrti*

yea Yes, indeed, truly

yield To produce as a result of cultivation, such as fruit To profit or give  
yoga. योग "Union" From *yuj*, "to yoke, harness, unite" The philosophy, process, disciplines and practices whose purpose is the yoking of individual consciousness with transcendent or divine consciousness One of the six *darśanas*, or systems of orthodox Hindu philosophy *Yoga* was codified by Patañjali in his *Yoga Sūtras* (ca 200 BCE) as the eight limbs (*aṣṭāṅga*) of *rāja yoga* It is essentially a one system, but historically, parts of *rāja yoga* have been developed and emphasized as *yogas* in themselves Prominent among the many forms of *yoga* are *haṭha yoga* (emphasizing bodily perfection in preparation for meditation), *kriyā yoga* (emphasizing breath control), as well as *karma yoga* (selfless service) and *bhakti yoga* (devotional practices) which could be regarded as an expression of *rāja yoga*'s first two limbs (*yama* and *niyama*) See *bhakti yoga*, *haṭha yoga*, *śākh darśana*, *karma yoga*, *rāja yoga*, *siddha yoga*.

*yoga pāda*. योगपाद The third of the successive stages in spiritual unfoldment in Śaiva Siddhānta, wherein the goal is realization of the Self See *pāda*, *yoga*.

*Yoga Sampradāya*. योगसंप्रदाय Another term for Siddha Siddhānta See *Śaivism*

*Yogaswāmī* யோகசுவாமி "Master of *yoga*." See *Kailāsa Paramparā*.

*yoga tapas* योगतपस् "Fiery union" Relentless, sustained *yoga* practice that awakens the fiery *kundalinī*, bringing the transforming heat of *tapas* and ultimately the repeated experience of the Self God, leading to *jñāna*, the wisdom state See *jñāna*, *tapas*, *yoga*.

*Yogatattva Upaniṣhad* योगतत्त्व उपनिषद् Scripture of 142 verses based on Advaita Vedānta and *yoga* practices, ca 1400

*Yoga Vāsishṭha* योगवासिष्ठ Poetic work of over 29,000 verses attributed to Vālmīki It is a dialog between Prince Rāma and his teacher, Sage Vāsishṭha, in the form of 50 intriguing stories which present *advaita* and the concepts and ideals of *yoga* in elegant Sanskrit (Variously dated between 500 and 1000 CE)

*yogi*. योगी One who practices *yoga*, especially *kundalinī* or *rāja yoga*.

**yoginī.** योगिनी Feminine counterpart of *yogī*

**yon** That or those (at a distance)

**yonī** योनि "Source, origin, female genitals, womb" In some *tantric* sects the Śivalinga is depicted as a phallic symbol, and the base as a vulva, or *yonī*. While the *linga* represents the unmanifest or static Absolute, the *yonī* represents the dynamic, creative energy of God, the womb of the universe.

**yore** Of yore a long time ago, in a distant past.

**young soul** A soul who has gone through only a few births, and is thus inexperienced or immature See *evolution of the soul, soul*

**yuga** युग "Period, age" One of four ages which chart the duration of the world according to Hindu thought. They are Satya (or Kṛta), Tretā, Dvāpara and Kali. In the first period, *dharma* reigns supreme, but as the ages revolve, virtue diminishes and ignorance and injustice increases. At the end of the Kali Yuga, which we are in now, the cycle begins again with a new Satya Yuga. It is said in the *Mahābhārata* that during the Satya Yuga all are *brāhmīns*, and the color of this *yuga* is white. In the Tretā Yuga, righteousness decreases by one-fourth and men seek reward for their rites and gifts, the color is red and the consciousness of the *kshatriya*, sovereignty, prevails. In the Dvāpara Yuga, the four *varnas* come fully into existence. The color is yellow. In the Kali Yuga, the color is black. Righteousness is one-tenth that of the Satya Yuga. True worship and sacrifice cease, and base, or *śūdra*, consciousness is prominent. Calamities, disease, fatigue and faults such as anger and fear prevail. People decline and their motives grow weak. See *cosmic cycle*



**zenith** Highest point, apex, summit.

**Zoroastrian.** Of or related to Zoroastrianism, a religion founded in Persia by Spenta Zarathustra (ca 600 BCE)

It has roughly 150,000 adherents today, mostly near Bombay, where they are called Parsis. The faith stresses monotheism while recognizing a universal struggle between the force of good (led by Ahura Mazda) and evil

(led by Ahriman). The sacred fire, always kept burning in the home, is considered the only worshipful symbol. Scripture is the *Zend Avesta*.

# Charts

## Vedic-Āgamic Cosmology, Tattvas and Chakras

Three charts are given on the following pages. The first shows Hindu cosmology, correlating the various divisions and categories of manifestation, as well as the bodies, sheaths, *chakras* and states of consciousness of the soul. It is organized with the highest consciousness, or subtlest level of manifestation, at the top, and the lowest, or grossest at the bottom. In studying the chart, it is important to remember that each level includes within itself all the levels above it. Thus, the element earth, the grossest or outermost aspect of manifestation, contains all the *tattvas* above it on the chart. They are its inner structure. Similarly, the soul encased in a physical body also has all the sheaths named above—*prāṇic*, instinctive-intellectual, cognitive and causal. Here, now, is a brief description of the major parts of the cosmology chart.

**lokas (3 worlds & 14 planes)** These are the classical divisions of consciousness, traditionally numbering 14, as listed. A simpler breakdown, shown in column one, is three *lokas*, causal, subtle and gross. The 14 *lokas* correspond directly to the *chakras*, psychic force centers within the inner bodies of the soul, also listed in column two. The 14 *chakras* are “doorways” within man to each of the 14 planes.

**kalā (5 spheres)** The center of the chart lists the five *kalās*, which are vast divisions of consciousness or “dimensions” of the mind. Note that the five states of mind—superconscious, subsuperconscious, conscious, subconscious and sub-subconscious—are also listed in this column.

**tattva (36 evolutes)** The 36 *tattvas*, listed to the right of the *kalās*, are the basic “building blocks” of the universe, successively grosser evolutes of consciousness. These are in three groups, as shown.

**kośa & śarīra (3 bodies & 5 sheaths)** The sheaths or bodies of the soul are given in the two right-hand columns. Note the correlation of these and the worlds by reading across the chart to the left to the two columns named “three worlds,” and “14 planes.”

On the second chart, the 14 *chakras* and their attributes are listed, and on the third, a complete list of all 36 *tattvas* is given. For more insights on the subjects in the chart, please refer to the lexicon.



३ लोक 3 WORLDS	१४ लोक 14 PLANES	५ लोक 5 SPHERES
3rd World Śivaloka, “plane of God,” and the Gods, or Kāranaloka, the “causal plane”	7 Satyaloka, “plane of reality,” also called Brahmalo- ka, <i>sahasrāra chakra</i>	5 Śāntyatītakalā Śivānanda, superconsciousness expanded into endless inner space.
	6 Tapoloka, “plane of austerity,” <i>ājñā chakra</i>	4 Śāntīkalā <i>kāraṇa chitta</i> , superconscious forms made of inner sounds and colors
	5 Janaloka, “creative plane” <i>viśuddha chakra</i>	• LIBERATED SOUL
2nd World Antarloka, subtle or as- tral plane	4 Maharloka, “plane of greatness,” <i>anāhata chakra</i>	3 Vidyākālā <i>anukārana chitta</i> , • BOUND SOUL • subsuperconscious awareness forms in their totality in progres- sive states of manifestation. • subsuperconscious cognition of the interrelated forces of the spiri- tual and magnetic energies
↑ cycle of re- incarnat- ion, <i>samsāra</i> ↓	<i>maṇipūra chakra</i>	2 Pratishthākālā <i>buddhi chitta</i> and <i>manas chitta</i> , realm of intellect and instinct
	3 Svarloka, “celestial plane”	
	2 Bhuvarloka, “plane of at- mosphere,” <i>svādhīśṭhāna chakra</i> — Pīṭhaloka, “world of ancestors”	
	Pretaloka, “world of the de- parted,” earth-bound souls Astral duplicate of Bhūloka	1 Nivṛttīkalā <i>jāgrat chitta</i> , <i>samskāra chitta</i> and <i>vāsanā chitta</i> —the conscious, subconscious and sub-subcon- scious mind, the interrelated magnetic forces between people, people and their possessions
1st World Bhūloka	1 Bhūloka, “earth plane,” <i>mūlādhāra chakra</i>	
Antarloka’s netherworld, Naraka	Naraka (7 hellish planes of lower consciousness, in descending order) —1) Put ( <i>atala chakra</i> ), —2) Avichī ( <i>vitalā chakra</i> ), —3) Samit ( <i>sutala chakra</i> ), —4) Tāmisra ( <i>talātala chakra</i> ), —5) Rujisha ( <i>rasātala chakra</i> ), —6) Kudmala ( <i>mahātala chakra</i> ), —7) Kākola ( <i>pātala chakra</i> )	

## ब्रह्माण्ड The Inner and Outer Universe

<p>Paraśiva (<i>atattva</i>, "beyond existence")</p> <p>३६ तत्त्व 36 EVOLUTES</p>	<p>३ शरीर 3 BODIES</p>	<p>५ कोश 5 SHEATHS</p>
<p><i>śuddha māyā</i>. pure spiritual energy</p> <p>1) <i>śiva tattva</i>. Parāśakti-<i>nāda</i>, Satchidānanda, pure consciousness</p> <p>2) <i>śakti tattva</i>. Parameśvara-<i>bindu</i>, Personal God</p>	<p><i>viśvagrāsa</i> final merger of <i>ānandamaya kośa</i> in Parameśvara</p>	
<p>3) <i>Sadāśiva tattva</i> power of revealment</p> <p>4) <i>Isāra tattva</i> power of concealment</p> <p>5) <i>Śuddhavidyā tattva</i> <i>dharma</i>, pure knowing, the powers of dissolution, preservation and creation—Rudra, Vishnu and Brahmā</p>	<p><i>kāraṇa śarīra</i> – <i>ānandamaya kośa</i> "causal body" – "sheath of bliss" the body of the soul, also called the actinic causal body</p>	
<p><i>śuddhaśuddha māyā</i> spiritual-magnetic</p> <p>6) <i>māyā tattva</i>. mirific energy</p> <p>7) <i>kāla tattva</i>. time</p> <p>8) <i>niyatī tattva</i> <i>karma</i></p> <p>9) <i>kalā tattva</i>. creativity, aptitude</p> <p>10) <i>vidyā tattva</i>. knowledge</p> <p>11) <i>rāga tattva</i> attachment, desire</p> <p>12) <i>puruṣa tattva</i> shrouded soul</p>	<p><i>sūkṣma śarīra</i> "subtle body," also called the astral body</p>	<p><i>vijñānamaya kośa</i> "sheath of cognition," the mental or actinodic causal sheath</p>
<p><i>asuddha māyā</i>. magnetic-gross energy</p> <p>13) <i>prakṛti tattva</i> primal nature</p> <p>14-16) <i>antahkarana</i> mental faculties</p> <p>17-21) <i>karmendriyas</i> organs of perception</p> <p>22-26) <i>jñānendriyas</i> organs of action</p> <p>32-35) <i>ākāśa tattva</i> (ether), <i>vāyu tattva</i> (air), <i>tejas tattva</i> (fire), <i>āpas tattva</i> (water)</p>		<p><i>manomaya kośa</i> intellectual (odic causal) sheath and instinctive (odic-astral) sheath</p>
<p>36) <i>prithivī tattva</i> earth</p>	<p><i>sthūla śarīra</i> – <i>annamaya kośa</i> "gross body" – "food-made sheath" the physical body, or odic body</p>	<p><i>prāṇamaya kośa</i> "sheath of vitality," which enlivens the physical body</p>

# 14 Chakras, Force Centers of Consciousness

Name	Location	Attribute	Plane	Planet	Element/sense	Petals	Letter
7) <i>sahasrāra</i>	crown of head	illumination	Satyaloaka	Neptune	Śūnya (void)	1008	
6) <i>ājñā</i>	third eye	divine sight	Tapoloka	Uranus	<i>mahātattva</i>	2	AUM
5) <i>viśuddha</i>	throat	divine love	Janaloka	Saturn	ether/hearing	16	YA
4) <i>anāhata</i>	heart center	direct cognition	Maharloka	Jupiter	air/touch	12	VĀ
3) <i>manipūra</i>	solar plexus	willpower	Svarloka	Mars	fire/sight	10	ŚI
2) <i>svādhishṭhāna</i>	navel	reason	Bhuvārloka	Venus	water/taste	6	MA
1) <i>mūlādhāra</i>	base of spine	memory/time/space	Bhūloka	Mercury	earth/smell	4	NA

1) <i>atāla</i>	hips	fear and lust	Put
2) <i>vtāla</i>	thighs	raging anger	Avichi
3) <i>sutāla</i>	knees	retaliatory jealousy	Samhāta
4) <i>talātāla</i>	calves	prolonged confusion	Tāmisra
5) <i>rasātāla</i>	ankles	selfishness	Rujsha
6) <i>mahātāla</i>	feet	absence of conscience	Kudmala
7) <i>pātāla</i>	soles of feet	malice and murder	Kākola

The *chakras* are nerve plexuses or centers of force and consciousness located within the inner bodies of man. In the physical body there are corresponding nerve plexuses, ganglia and glands. The seven principle *chakras* can be seen psychically as colorful, multi-petalled wheels or lotuses situated along the spinal cord. The seven lower *chakras*, barely visible, exist below the spine.

See. Cosmology chart, Naraka, and individual *chakra* entries

## The 36 Tattvas: Categories of Existence

### ŚUDDHA TATTVAS

#### Actinic or Pure Spiritual Energy

- 1) *Śiva tattva*. Parāśakti-*nāda* (Satchidānanda, pure consciousness)
- 2) *Śakti tattva*. Parameśvara-*bindu* (Naṭarāja, Personal God), energy, light and love
- 3) *Sadāśiva tattva*. the power of revealment (Sadāśiva)
- 4) *Īśvara tattva*. the power of concealment (Maheśvara)
- 5) *Suddhavidyā tattva*. *dharma*, pure knowing, the powers of dissolution (Rudra), preservation (Vishnu) and creation (Brahmā)

### ŚUDDHĀŚUDDHA TATTVAS

#### Actinodic or Spiritual-Magnetic Energy

- 6) *māyā tattva*. mirific energy
- 7) *kāla tattva*. time
- 8) *niyatī tattva*. *karma*
- 9) *kalā tattva*. creativity, aptitude
- 10) *vidyā tattva*. knowledge
- 11) *rāga tattva*. attachment, desire
- 12) *puruṣa tattva*. the soul shrouded by the above five *tattvas*

### AŚUDDHA TATTVAS

#### Odic or Gross-Magnetic Energy

- |  |                                    |
|--|------------------------------------|
| 13) <i>prakṛiti tattva</i> . primal nature         |                                    |
| 14) <i>buddhi tattva</i> . intellect               |                                    |
| 15) <i>ahamkāra tattva</i> . external ego          |                                    |
| 16) <i>manas tattva</i> . instinctive mind         |                                    |
| 17) <i>śrotra tattva</i> . hearing (ears)          | 27) <i>śabdha tattva</i> . sound   |
| 18) <i>tvak tattva</i> . touching (skin)           | 28) <i>sparsa tattva</i> . feel    |
| 19) <i>chakṣhu</i> . seeing (eyes)                 | 29) <i>rūpa tattva</i> . form      |
| 20) <i>rasanā tattva</i> . tasting (tongue)        | 30) <i>rasa tattva</i> . taste     |
| 21) <i>ghrāṇa tattva</i> . smelling (nose)         | 31) <i>gandha tattva</i> . odor    |
| 22) <i>vāk tattva</i> . speech (voice)             | 32) <i>ākāśa tattva</i> . ether    |
| 23) <i>pāṇi tattva</i> . grasping (hands)          | 33) <i>vāyu tattva</i> . air       |
| 24) <i>pāda tattva</i> . walking (feet)            | 34) <i>tejas tattva</i> . fire     |
| 25) <i>pāyu tattva</i> . excretion (anus)          | 35) <i>āpas tattva</i> . water     |
| 26) <i>upastha tattva</i> . procreation (genitals) | 36) <i>pṛithivī tattva</i> . earth |



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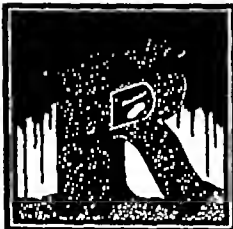
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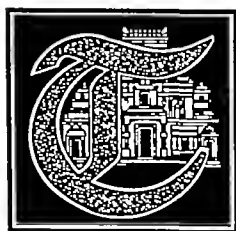
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## Sāstra Uddharanāsūchī

## शास्त्र उद्धरणसूची

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- KYV*, *MaitU* 7 11 8 *UpH*, 458
- KYV*, *MaitU* 7 11 6 *UpH*, 458
- KYV*, *MaitU* 6 17 *VE*, 667
- 441 *Siva Samhita* 1 34 *SS*, 6
- TMant* 2481 *TM*
- TMant* 1437 *TM*
- Nat*, “That” *NT*, 87

*Tayumanavar* 2 5 NT, 8

*TMurai* 6 308 1 PS, 113

### **Mandala 31 Himalayan Lineage**

447 *TMant* 1487 TM

449 *TMant* 91 TM

451 *TMant* 92 TM

453 *Nat*, "My Master" NT, 154–5

455 *KulTantra* 8 3 BO KT, 79

456 AV, *Yoga-ShikhaU* 5 53 YT, 26

AV, *MundU* 1 2 8 UpM, 77

KYV, *MahanU* 505 VE, 439

KYV, *SvetU* 6 22–23 UpH, 411

*Guru Gita* 43 GG, 14

*KulTantra* 10 1 KT, 101

457 *KulTantra* 10 1 KT, 101

*KulTantra* 10 1 KT, 101

*Guru Gita* 115 GG, 47

*Nat*, "Chellappan danced" NT, 88

*TMant* 67 TM

*TMant* 1778 TM

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493 *Kailasasam*, SP 9 23–26 AI, 1707

500 *Panchartha B*, *Kaun* 3 1 YT, 203

503 *Malati-Madhava* 4 27 KK, 58

503 *Inscription on Kedareshvara Temple and Maṭha*, 1162 ce KK, 103

506 *Allam VachCandrik* 1959 SO, 167

507 *VachGanachara*. RL, 105

*VachBasavanna* 901 VB

*SunyaSamp*, vol 1, p 57 RL, 99

508 *Renukacharya*. SV, 57

513 *Br Sutra B*, *Srikantha*. HN, 391

514 *Br Sutra B*, *Srikantha*. HN, 394

515 *Sivakarnamrita* AD, 105

*Sivarakshamani* *Dipika* AD, 93

517–18 VM, *Gorakshanatha* PG, 245

608 Letter by M Müller, TY, xxv

731 RN, 731

### **SCRIPTURAL ABBREVIATIONS**

AG Agama

AGj Agama, Jnana Pada

AGk Agama, Kriya Pada

Arthavas Arthavasikha

AV Atharva Veda

B Bhashya

BGita Bhagavad Gita

BPur Bhagavata Purana

BO Based on translation from

BR Brahmana

Brihad Brihadaranyaka

Chand Chandogya

CJD Crest Jewel of Discrimination

Devik Devikalottara

DS Dharma Sastras

Inv Invocation

Jaim Jaiminiya

JP Jnana Pada

JAV Jnana-archara-vichara

Kaun Kaundinya

KulTantra Kularnava Tantra

KYV Krishna Yajur Veda

Maha Mahanarayana

MaitU Maitreya

Mrig Mrigendra

MundU Mundaka

Naradapari Naradaparivrajaka

NaraPur Narasimhapurvatapaniya

Nat Natchintanai

PeriyaP Periyapurana

Prana Pranagnihotra

Pur Purana

RV Rig Veda

S Samhita

Sak Sakshatkara

SarvaAG Sarvajnanottara Agama

SathaBR. Satapatha Brahmana

SGS Sankhyananda Grihya Sutras

SP Siva Purana

Supra Suprabheda

SU Svetasvatara Upanishad

SV Sama Veda

SYV Sukla Yajur Veda

Tait Taittiriya

TMan Tirumantiram

TMurai Tirumurai

U Upanishad

Vach Vachana

VishnPur Vishnudharmottara Purana

VM Viveka Martanda

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AD	Dr N Ramesan, <i>Sri Appaya Dikshita</i> (Hyderabad, Srimad Appaya Dikshitendra Granthavali Prakasana Samithi)		
AG	Ratna Ma Navaratnam, <i>Aum Ganesha, The Peace of God</i> (Jaffna, Vidya Bhavan, 1978)		
AI	J L. Shastri, <i>Ancient Indian Tradition and Mythology</i> , vol 1 & 4 (Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass, 1973)		
AK	Prof S K Ramachandra Rao, <i>Āgama-Kosha</i> ( <i>Āgama Encyclopaedia</i> ), vol 2, <i>Saiva and Śakta Āgamas</i> (Bangalore, Kalpatharu Research Academy, 1990)		
AT	Karaikkalammayyar, <i>The Arputat Tiruvantati</i> (Pondicherry, Institut Francais d'Indologie, 1956)		
AvG	Ralph T H Griffith, <i>Hymns of the Atharva Veda</i> (New Delhi, Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt Ltd, 1985)		
AvW	William Dwight Whitney, <i>Atharva Veda Samhita</i> (Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass, 1971)		
BgM	Juan Mascaro, <i>The Bhagavad Gita</i> (Baltimore, Penguin Books, 1966)		
CJ	Swami Prabhavananda and Christopher Isherwood, <i>Shankara's Crest-Jewel of Discrimination</i> (Hollywood, Vedanta Press, 1947)		
DG	Swami Satyananda Saraswati, <i>Devi Gita</i> (Napa, California, Devi Mandir Publications, 1991)		
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FS	Steven Rosen, <i>Food for the Spirit, Vegetarianism and the World Religions</i> (Bala Books, Old Westbury, New York, 1990)		
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- KT M P Pandit, *Kularnava Tantra* (Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass, 1984)
- LG Mariasusai Dhavamony, *Love of God According to Saiva Siddhanta* (London, Oxford University Press, 1971)
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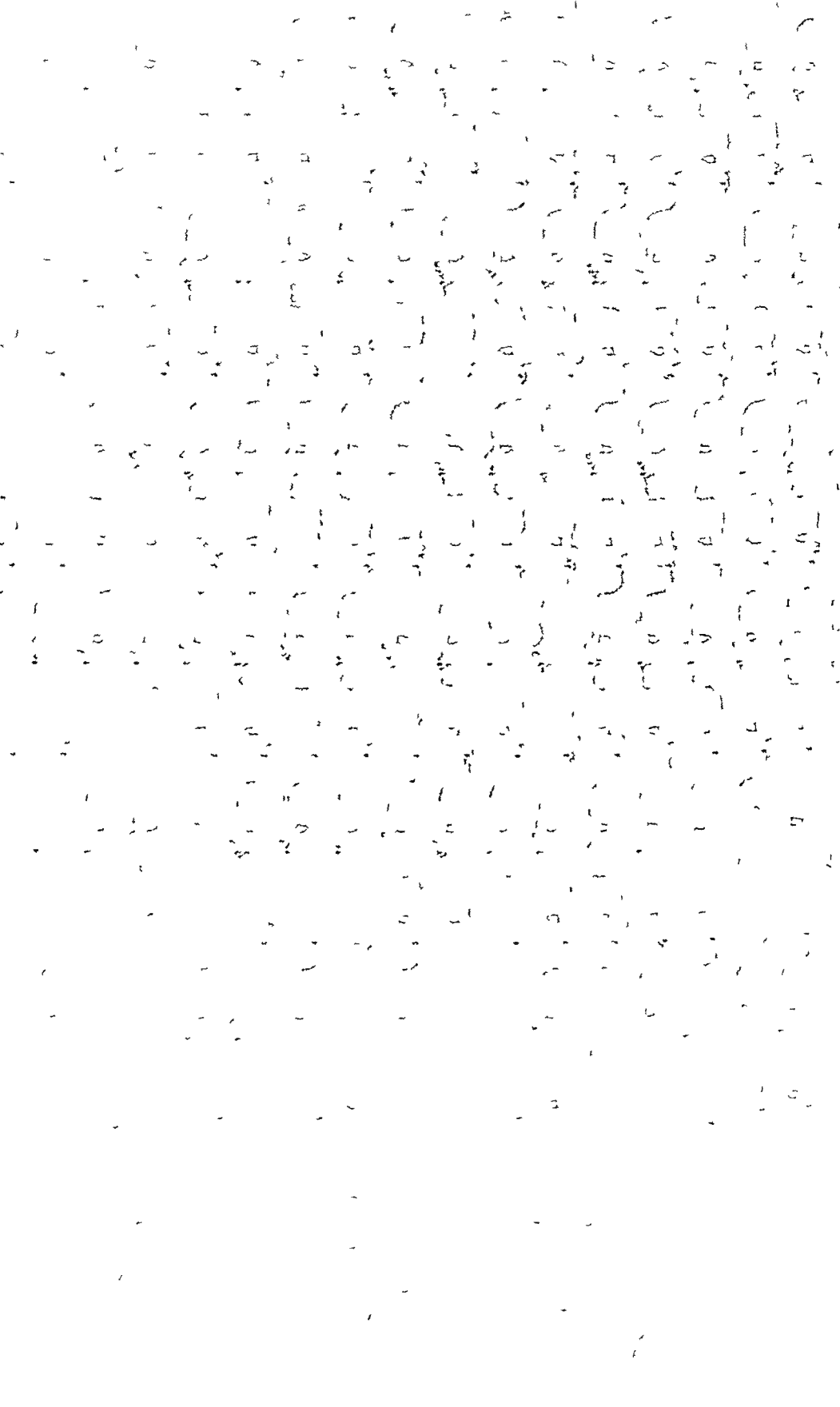
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# Colophon

## *Antyaśabda*

## अन्त्यशब्द

**D**ANCING WITH ŚIVA HINDUISM'S CONTEMPORARY CATECHISM WAS DESIGNED AND ILLUSTRATED BY THE SWĀMĪS OF THE ŚAIVA Siddhānta Yoga Order at Kauai's Hindu Monastery on the Garden Island in Hawaii. This third book in the Rishī Collection was composed and assembled using QuarkXpress on DayStar-Powercache-50-mhz-accelerated Macintosh IIs, a Macintosh Portable and a Powerbook 170 on a network established with the help of software designer Bob Roblin. The text was typeset on an Apple LaserWriter Pro 630 in Adobe's Minion family of fonts to which diacritical marks were added with Fontographer. The main verses are set in 12 5-point Minion medium with 15-point linespacing. The lexicon and index are set in 9-point Minion with 11-point linespacing. Devanāgarī and Tamil are set in fonts created by Ecological Linguistics.

Of the 165 Rajput paintings, some were digitized and output to negatives by Vikram Patel at Marvik Colour in New York City. Others were produced conventionally by Honolulu Graphic Arts. Illustrations, patterned graphics and sacred symbols were produced with Adobe's Streamline and Illustrator software and a Wacom graphics tablet, then output directly to negatives at 2,540 dpi on a Linotron Imagesetter by Krishna Copy in San Francisco.

The cover was color proofed on a Tektronix Phaser III, then ported to a Scitex for output on a high-resolution color plotter. The book was printed in Harrisonburg, Virginia, by Banta Company on a Timson web-offset press using 60#

Finch Opaque Book paper The cover art is an eighteenth-century painting, Chamba School, of Śiva witnessing a devotee's dance, displayed in the National Museum, New Delhi The end-sheet painting in the hard-cover edition depicts the bathing ghats of a little town, is an eighteenth century piece kept in the Baroda Museum in Gujarat and used with the kind permission of Roland and Sabrina Michaud from their wonderful book, *Mirror of India* The hardcover edition is cased with Kivar 9 with U V coating San Francisco artist John Kuzich designed the cover and the Himalayan Academy logo The photo on the back cover was taken by Rohini Kumar at his RK Studios in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Sanskrit proofreading and guidance was kindly and patiently provided by Vyaas Houston, founder of the American Sanskrit Institute, Dr P Jayaraman, Executive Director of Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Woodside, New York, Pundit and Jyotisha Shastri Laxmishanker Trivedi and his son Devendra of Fremont, California, Dr George Hart, Professor of Tamil at the University of California at Berkeley, Professor Jayaraman Sethuraman of the University of Florida, Braj B Kachru and his wife Yamuna, professors of linguistics at the University of Illinois, Urbana, Veda Pundit Ravichandran of Madras and California, and Pundit A V Mylvaganam of Jaffna, Sri Lanka

The multi-level index for further study and research was created with the help of Jordan and Vita Richman of Writer's Anonymous, Phoenix, Arizona

Dr Prem Sahai of Webster City, Iowa, contributed to the presentation of the Hindu family structure In presenting the major sects of Hinduism, C Ramachandran, editor of *Tattvaloka*, answered several questions on behalf of the Sankaracharya of Sringeri Matha, and three scholars wrote special tracts on Smārtism, Śāktism and Vaishnavism, respectively, for *Hinduism Today* T K Venkateswaran, Profes-

sor of Religious Studies at University of Detroit, Mercy, June MacDaniel, Assistant Professor of Religious Studies at the College of Charleston, South Carolina, and Graham M Schweig, Director of the Institute for Vaishnava Studies

Dr Virendra Sodhi, Ayurveda Vaidya, kindly confirmed the accuracy of the sections on the ancient science of *āyurveda* Bill Shurtleff of Lafayette, California, critiqued the Hindu Timeline Assistance on astrology was provided by Pundit K N Navaratnam of Melbourne, Australia; and Chakrapani D Ullal of Los Angeles

The Hindu Businessmen's Association of Northern California established a generous, irrevocable endowment to provide needy individuals and worthy institutions with complimentary copies of this important sourcebook.

For all this noble, talented and selfless assistance, we want to offer our heartfelt thanks May many blessings come to each one who contributed to this tome

Over a decade ago, when the first edition was being produced, many individuals contributed their time and knowledge In researching the tradition of *sannyāsa*, two of my monks traveled through South India and Sri Lanka speaking with heads of Hindu monasteries Particularly helpful were Swami Tapasyananda of the Ramakrishna Mission, Swami Chinmayananda of Chinmaya Missions, Swami Satchidananda of the Integral Yoga Institute and Pundit M Jnanaprakasam of Erlalai Aadheenam in Jaffna

Always available to assist in a wide range of philosophical and historical areas was Pundit M Arunachalam Information and assistance on clarifying the two schools of Saiva Siddhanta came from numerous devout scholars, including Justice Maharajan of Madras, the world's foremost adept on *Tirumantiram*, Pundit Kandiah of Jaffna, A P C Veerabhagu of Tuticorin, the Guru Mahasannidhanam of the 1,400-year-old Dharmapuram Aadheenam and his pundits, and the Selangor All Ceylon Saivites Association in Kuala Lumpur



Finally, appreciations to my Śaiva Siddhānta Yoga Order of eleven *swāmīs*, who patiently met daily, month after month to finalize the essential philosophical presentation contained in these pages, and to my tireless band of Śivanadiyars, *yogīs* and *sādhakas*, who also assisted in many ways

Providing invaluable assistance, information gathering and coordination as our official liaison officers for two decades were Dr S Shanmugasundaram in Sri Lanka, and his associate A Gunanayagam, and in India, Tiru N K Murti, retired Aerodrome Officer

In defining the practical and esoteric aspects of Hindu temple liturgy, we were blessed with the backing of Sri Sambamurthi Sivacharya of the South India Archaka Sangam, who sent two expert priests, Kumaraswami Gurukal and Shanmuga Gurukal, to Hawaii to train my Śaiva Swāmīs in the sacred *parārtha pūjā* for daily performance in the Kadavul Hindu temple

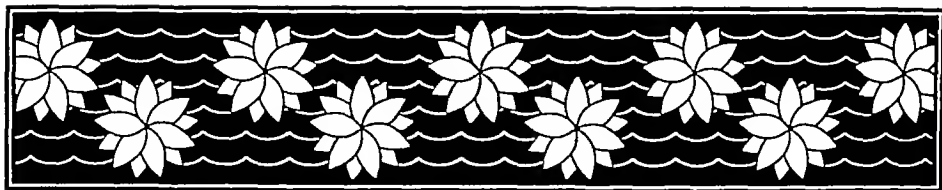
In the area of scriptural translations, of course, we owe a debt of gratitude to a host of dedicated scholars, including Dr B Natarajan, who rendered the entire *Tirumantiram* into English at our behest, Professor Raimundo Panikkar for his beautiful anthology of Vedic texts, *The Vedic Experience*, which he produced over a period of ten years while residing above a Śiva temple in Varanasi, the late Dr S. Radhakrishnan, former President of India, Robert Hume and Juan Mascaro for their translations of the major *Upanishads*, the Sivathondan Nilayam of Jaffna, Sri Lanka, for its English translation of Sage Yogaswami's *Natchintanai*, and Ratna Ma Navaratnam for her *Testament of Truth, Aum Ganesa and Karttikeya, the Divine Child*

I would also like to honor the Guru Mahasannidhanam of the 2,000-year-old Tiruvavaduthurai Aadheenam, home of the *mahāsamādhi* site of Rishi Tirumular, for his support through the years And we cannot fail to offer thanks to the

late Prof. R. Ramaseshan of Tanjavur, South India, who translated the first edition of *Dancing with Śiva* into lovely Tamil just before he was murdered by atheists who opposed his spiritual work.

Calling forth the blessings of inner worlds, Dr. A Anandataraja Deekshidar and others of the ancient hereditary Deekshidar priesthood at Chidambaram Temple in South India performed monthly *pūjās* blessing this work. At Kauai Aadheenam's Kadavul Hindu Temple, on the island Kauai in the Hawaiian Islands, the world's most remote land mass, during the two years it took to create this fourth edition, my monks held successive three-hour vigils around the clock and performed *pūjā* every three hours, night and day, without fail

Going back even further in our history, we offer our deepest thanks to Tiru Kandiah Chettiar for his early assistance and introducing me at age 21 to the culture and holy people of Jaffna, and most especially for taking me on that never-to-be-forgotten, full-moon day in May to my beloved *satguru*, Sage Yogaswami



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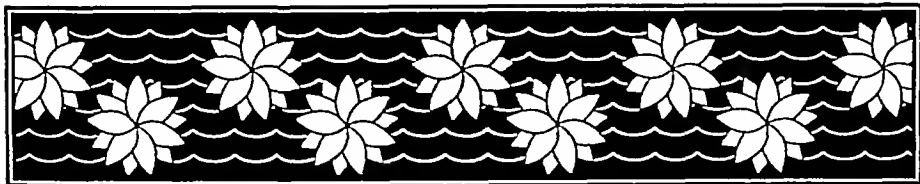
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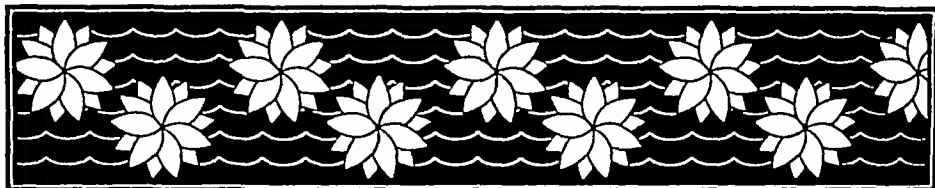
## About the Author

In 1949 Sivaya Subramuniyaswami, as a young man of 22, received holy orders of *sannyāsa* from a renowned *siddha yogi* and worshiper of Śiva, Sage Yogaswāmī of Sri Lanka Today Subramuniyaswami carries forward this lineage as Satguru of Kauai Aadheenam, a 51-acre Hindu temple-monastery

complex located on the Hawaiian island of Kauai He has established teaching centers in North America in Concord, California, and in the beautiful garden-island country of Mauritius in the Indian Ocean

Satguru Sivaya Subramuniyaswami is founder and publisher of *Hinduism Today* His published writings, comprising more than 30 books, are unique and practical insights on metaphysics, mysticism, *yoga* and orthodox Hinduism based on many decades of experience in teaching, counseling and initiating devotees

In 1986 New Delhi's World Council of Religion named him one of five Jagadāchāryas, world teachers, for his international efforts in promoting a Hindu renaissance for half a century In recent years the Global Forum of Spiritual and Parliamentary Leaders for Human Survival chose Subramuniyaswami as a Hindu representative at its remarkable conferences At Oxford in 1988, Moscow in 1990, Rio de Janeiro in 1992, and Kyoto, Japan, in 1993, religious and political leaders from all religions and countries met for the first time in history to discuss the future of human life on this planet



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107 Kaholalele Road, Kapaa, HI 96746, USA

*Hail, O sannyāsin, love's embodiment! Does any power exist apart from love? Diffuse thyself throughout the happy world. Let painful māyā cease and never return. Day and night give praise unto the Lord. Pour forth a stream of songs to melt the very stones. Attain the sight where night is not, nor day. See Śiva everywhere and rest in bliss. Live without interest in worldly gain. Here, as thou hast ever been, remain.*

